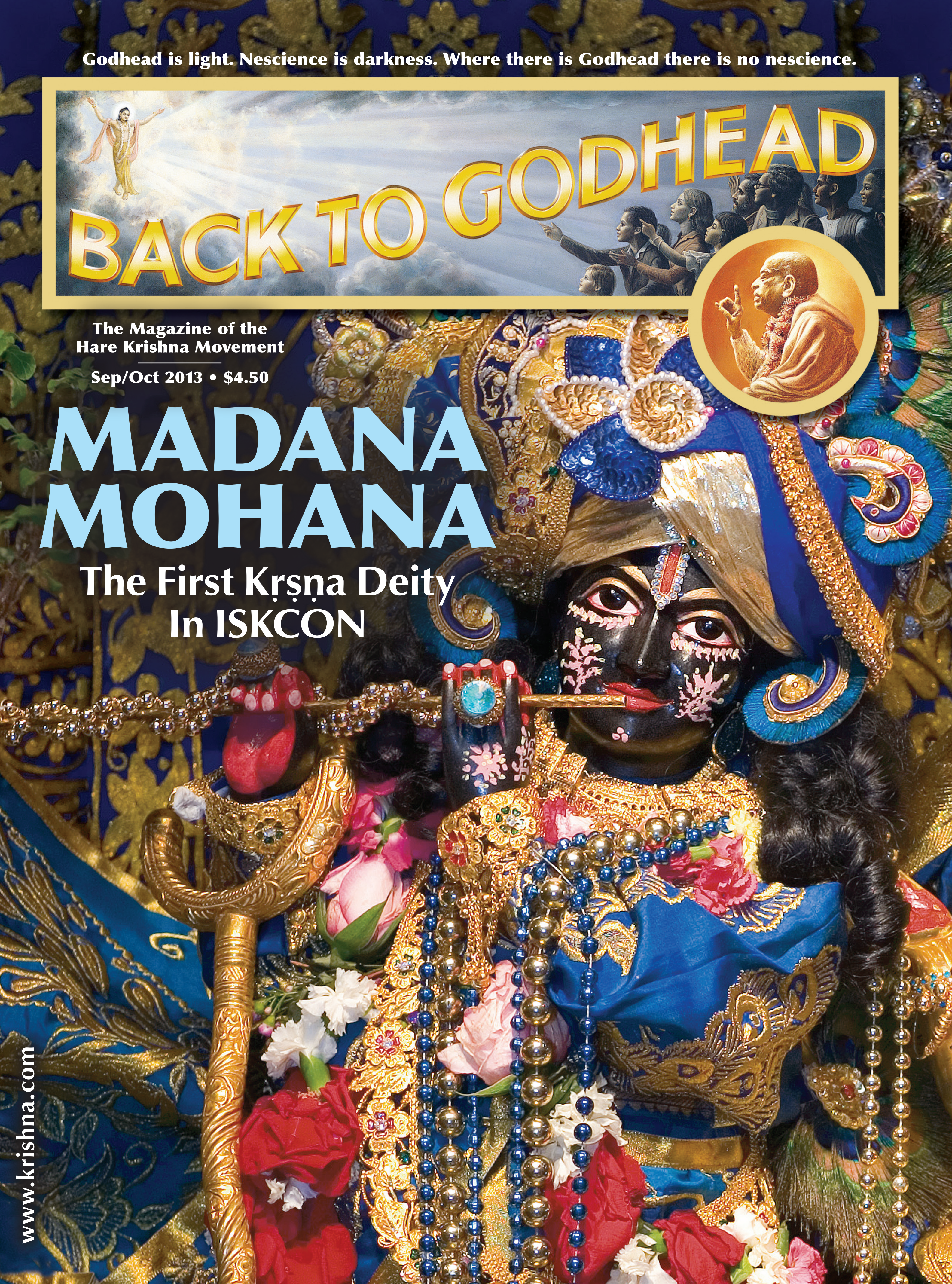
Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

# BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement

Sep/Oct 2013 • $4.50



## MADANA MOHANA

### The First Kṛṣṇa Deity In ISKCON

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# BACK to GODH

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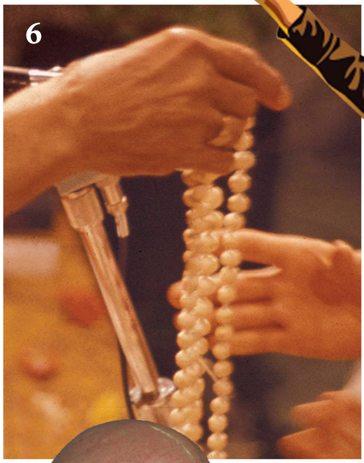

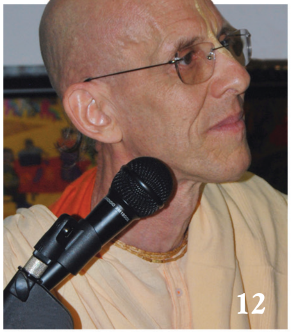

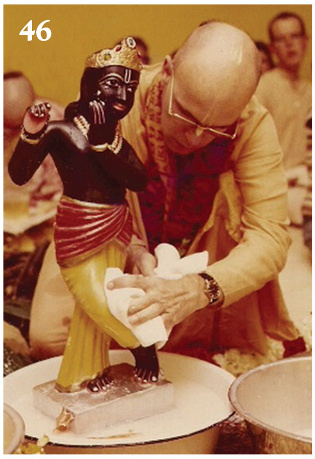

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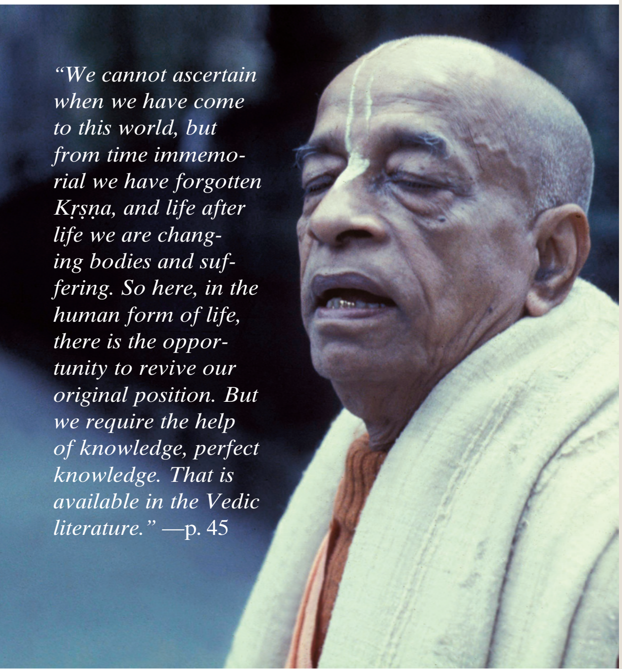
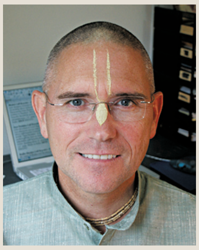
COVER Śrī Madana-Mohāna, the Kṛṣṇa deity discovered in New York City by two of Śrīla Prabhupāda's early disciples, is now worshiped at the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple outside Washington, D.C. (Photo: © Lakṣmīvān Dāsa [Lawson Knight]).



*"We cannot ascertain when we have come to this world, but from time immemorial we have forgotten Kṛṣṇa, and life after life we are changing bodies and suffering. So here, in the human form of life, there is the opportunity to revive our original position. But we require the help of knowledge, perfect knowledge. That is available in the Vedic literature."* —p. 45

## WELCOME

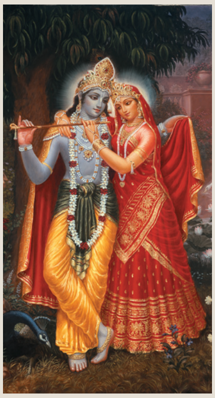


Worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa in His deity form is an essential spiritual practice of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement and the ancient tradition to which it belongs. The Vedic scriptures teach that God, being absolute, is fully present as the deity to receive the worship of His devotees.

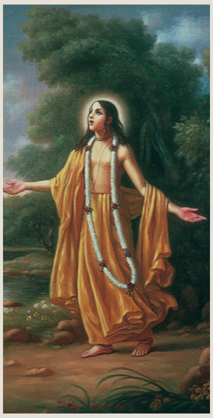
When Śrīla Prabhupāda launched the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in the West, he didn't introduce deity worship right away. First he focused on Lord Kṛṣṇa's teachings in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra.* Then Kṛṣṇa came on His own, first in San Francisco in His form as Jagannātha, and then in New York City in His original form as the all-attractive flute-playing cowherd boy. Satyarāja Dāsa relates the story of that deity, now worshiped outside Washington, D.C.

Besides New York and Washington, this issue takes us to a few other major cities. At Wits University in Johannesburg, Jayādvaita Swami lectures on education. In Budapest, we get introduced to Bhaktivedanta College, where Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees have won EU-accreditation to grant degrees in yoga and Vaiṣṇava theology. And in Hong Kong, a newcomer to Kṛṣṇa consciousness gets a request he'll fulfill decades later—in the pages of this magazine.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*



*Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.*



*Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.*

## OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.*

BACK TO
GODHEAD
*The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement*

**FOUNDER** (under the direction of His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda) **His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda** (1896–1977)

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INDIA: **PUBLISHER** Yudhiṣṭhira Dāsa • **PRODUCTION** Sac-cid-ānanda Dāsa, Sundara Rūpa Dāsa • **GENERAL MANAGER & CIRCULATION** Pāṇḍurāṅga Dāsa • **ACCOUNTS** Sahadeva Dāsa • **SUBSCRIBER SERVICES** Mañjarī Devī Dāsī

**EDITORIAL OFFICES** Send editorial correspondence to BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Phone: (386) 462-7794. Email: editors@krishna.com. Or BTG, 3rd Floor, 302, Amrut Industrial Estate, Western Express Hwy., Mira Rd. (E), Mumbai 401104, India. Phone: (022) 32556701. Email: btgindia@pamho.net

**SUBSCRIPTIONS** *Back to Godhead* is published six times a year. For a one-year subscription (US and Canada) send $19.95 to BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616, USA. Or call toll-free: 1-800-800-3284. For subscriptions outside the US and Canada add $10. Payment in US funds (payable on a US bank) must accompany your order. In the UK send £18.99 to BTG UK Ltd., Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts. WD25 8EZ. In South Africa send R240 to Back to Godhead, P. O. Box 56003, Chatsworth 4030.

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**PREPRESS & PRINTING** Interprint, Clearwater, Florida, USA

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*Back to Godhead* (ISSN 0005-3643, USPS 604-170) is published bimonthly (six times a year) for $19.95 per year by Back To Godhead, 18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615. Periodicals postage paid at Alachua, Florida, and additional mailing offices. CANADA POST AGREEMENT #: 40612608. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Back to Godhead, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, FL 32616. Canada Returns to be sent to Pitney Bowes, P. O. Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2

# Letters

## Stuck in Reincarnation?

How would I know if I were doing something that would keep me stuck in the cycle of reincarnation? For example, I see Kṛṣṇa in all things, but if I eat a little meat with Him in mind, will He turn me away? Or if I do something outside the rules devotees have to follow, but as an offering to Kṛṣṇa, is it still bad? How would I know if something is going to cause me to be born again? In the *Gītā* Kṛṣṇa says you only have to remember Him at the time of death to attain Him. Is this true no matter what you do in life?

Rachel
Via the Internet

*Our reply:* To know if something is keeping you back from Kṛṣṇa and within the cycle of birth and death, you need to connect with a bona fide spiritual master, a guru, who will guide you through the process of purification to the level of pure devotion.

If you can see Kṛṣṇa in all things, why would you eat His creatures? He surely does not appreciate spiritual seekers or anyone else killing innocent creatures or engaging others in the killing. This world works on the principle of action-reaction, and hurting others brings around a reaction. You will have to feel the pain you have caused by eating animals.

What Kṛṣṇa says about remembering Him at the time of death is undoubtedly true. But we never know when the time of death will occur. Thus we prepare to remember Him at any moment by following His instructions. If we want to reconnect with Kṛṣṇa, we must be ready to follow His guidelines. If we are not leading a Kṛṣṇa conscious life, at the time of death we will not be able to remember Kṛṣṇa. Remembrance, forgetfulness, and knowledge come from Kṛṣṇa.

It is not hard to follow the principles of liberation. You just need proper association. There is nothing in sinful activities that can bring you actual pleasure. They are abominable. You just need some time without this lower taste to be able to appreciate the higher taste and abandon the former altogether.

## Brahmā's Position

I've heard that Lord Viṣṇu, Śiva, and Durgā are names of persons whereas Lord Brahmā is the name of a position. Please educate me on this.

K. V. Rao
Via the Internet

*Our reply:* You are correct that Lord Viṣṇu, Śiva, and Durgā are divine persons. Lord Viṣṇu is the Personality of Godhead Himself. Lord Śiva is in his own unique category. He exists eternally and is not of the material energy. When the material world is annihilated, Lord Śiva and Lord Viṣṇu remain. Durgā Devī is an expansion of Lord Kṛṣṇa's internal energy, and she manages the material energy. She is the eternal consort of Lord Śiva.

The post of Lord Brahmā, on the other hand, is a position occupied by a *jīva* soul, a soul like you or I. We are spiritual energy but very small, and so we become covered by the material energy. When the material energy is not manifested, then Lord Brahmā is also not manifested. Also, there are many Lord Brahmās who manage the various universes within the material world. So there are many positions available, and very advanced devotees may be appointed to the post of Brahmā.

## Why These Painful Bodies?

I came to know that the root cause of our suffering is our karma. What about the animals then? Why has God created one animal to eat others? Why did He create bodies with a lot of pain? Who is responsible for the pain of animals? Why should they be born here and suffer? Who is enjoying their suffering? Why can't God stop the suffering? If we kill a cow it is wrong, but if a tiger kills it is nature. What is the reason behind all this?

Suresh Venkata
Via the Internet

*Our reply:* First of all, the root cause of our suffering is not karma, but material desire and ignorance of our eternal spiritual nature. We think we are matter and that matter will make us happy. Because of that illusion, we work hard to enjoy the material world, and the result is karma because selfish action leads to reaction. Whether "good" or "bad," any reaction leads us to repeated birth and death and to temporary happiness and suffering. And the cycle goes on.

The pain of the body comes with the package: The body is matter, and matter gets old, rots, and dies. We suffer both mentally and physically. We suffer mentally because we want to enjoy and pain gets in the way. We suffer physically because pain prevents us from doing what we want to do, or have to do. Yet we still attempt to enjoy, often at the expense of others, even the animals, and so we get karma and suffer now and in the next life.

Animals are suffering due to past karma, due to past material desires, stemming from their attempts to enjoy in some human body before. The animals don't generate karma; they simply move up the evolutionary scale, undergoing birth and death until they reach the human form. There the soul has choices to make. In the animal form there are no choices. Instinct drives their actions, and so there are no reactions, just upward movement until they reach the life of choices, human life.

The fact that one living entity is the food for another in the animal kingdom is just the law of nature in action. Being born as a cow and getting killed by the tiger is the end of some reaction, and so now the souls are free of some karma and can continue their journey toward human life, where their own choices will determine their future suffering and enjoyment, and where their emancipation from suffering altogether is possible.

If in the human form they become Kṛṣṇa conscious and engage in Kṛṣṇa's service, which is karma-free, then there will be no more suffering and no more birth and death. When we are engaged in Kṛṣṇa's service, there is no reaction, no more birth and death, and therefore no more suffering.

You ask who is enjoying the suffering of the animals. Some people enjoy eating meat, and so they kill animals to enjoy now. But in the future those people will suffer in an animal body and perhaps get killed by a tiger or a butcher. What goes around comes around. This will continue until we leave the wheel of repeated birth and death.

*Replies were written by Krishna.com Live Help volunteers. Please write to us at: BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, Florida 32616, USA. Email: editors@krishna.com.*

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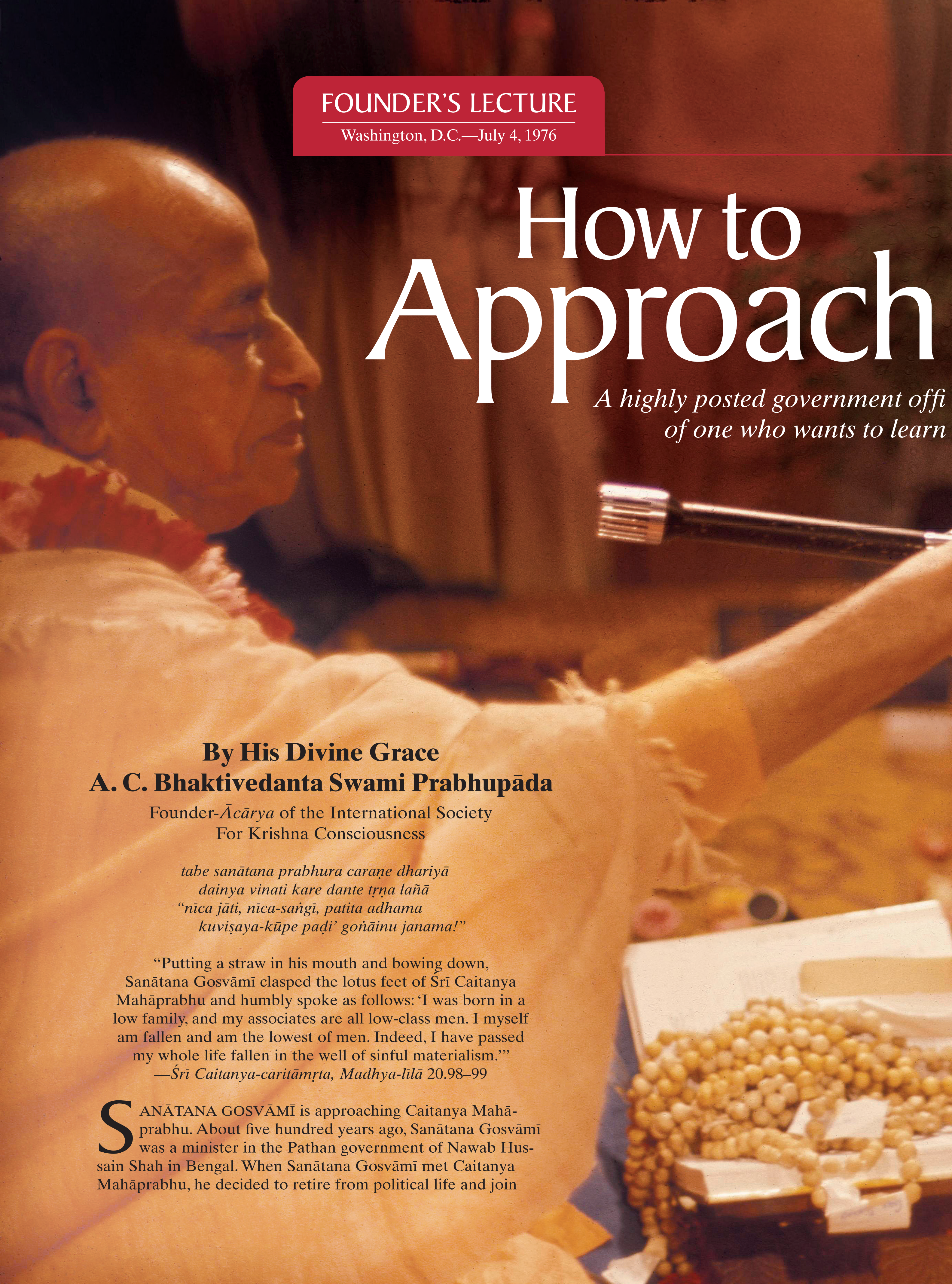


FOUNDER'S LECTURE

Washington, D.C.—July 4, 1976

# How to Approach

*A highly posted government offi*
*of one who wants to learn*

**By His Divine Grace**
**A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda**

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society
For Krishna Consciousness

*tabe sanātana prabhura caraṇe dhariyā*
*dainya vinati kare dante tṛṇa lañā*
*"nīca jāti, nīca-saṅgī, patita adhama*
*kuviṣaya-kūpe paḍi' goṅāinu janama!"*

"Putting a straw in his mouth and bowing down, Sanātana Gosvāmī clasped the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and humbly spoke as follows: 'I was born in a low family, and my associates are all low-class men. I myself am fallen and am the lowest of men. Indeed, I have passed my whole life fallen in the well of sinful materialism.'"
—*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 20.98–99

SANĀTANA GOSVĀMĪ is approaching Caitanya Mahāprabhu. About five hundred years ago, Sanātana Gosvāmī was a minister in the Pathan government of Nawab Hussain Shah in Bengal. When Sanātana Gosvāmī met Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he decided to retire from political life and join

# a Guru

*cial reveals the mood required*
*from a spiritual master.*

Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement. When he wanted to resign, the Nawab become very angry because he depended on Sanātana Gosvāmī in ruling the kingdom. When Sanātana Gosvāmī proposed to retire, the Nawab became very much disturbed. Eventually Sanātana Gosvāmī escaped from government service and with great difficulty approached Caitanya Mahāprabhu when He was at Vārāṇasi, or Benares.

Sanātana Gosvāmī is an *ācārya,* someone who knows the meaning of *śāstra,* or scripture, behaves according to the *śāstra,* and teaches his disciples accordingly. The recommendation of the Vedic literature is that one should worship the *ācārya.*

Sanātana Gosvāmī is teaching us by his personal behavior how to approach a guru. To approach a guru, the first business is surrender. That is stated everywhere in the Vedic literature:

*tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum*
*evābhigacchet*
*samit-pāṇiḥ śrotriyaṁ*
*brahma-niṣṭham*

"To understand these things properly, one must humbly approach, with firewood in hand, a spiritual master who is learned in the *Vedas* and firmly devoted to the Absolute Truth." (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.12) In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.34) Kṛṣṇa says:

*tad viddhi praṇipātena*
*paripraśnena sevayā*
*upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ*
*jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*

"Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth." First of all, a guru is *tattva-darśī,* one who knows the Absolute Truth.

The Absolute Truth is Kṛṣṇa. As He says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.7), *mattaḥarataraṁ nānyat kiñcid asti dhanañjaya:* "O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me." All previous *ācāryas* and modern *ācāryas* accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In India within the last thousand years, all the *ācāryas*—Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, Nimbārka, even Śaṅkarācārya—all accepted Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

**In India within the last thousand years, all the *ācāryas* accepted Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.**

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is also Kṛṣṇa. As Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa has appeared as His own devotee. Five thousand years ago, Kṛṣṇa appeared as the Supreme Lord and instructed *Bhagavad-gītā* to the fallen souls. He asserted His Lordship by saying, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja:* "Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me." (Bg. 18.66) But puffed-up so-called learned scholars and men of position declined: "Why should I surrender to Kṛṣṇa?" Therefore Kṛṣṇa Himself appeared as a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. That is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself, but He's teaching how to approach Kṛṣṇa. And His disciples are also teaching the same philosophy.

There is no difference between Kṛṣṇa's philosophy and Caitanya Mahāprabhu's philosophy. It is not that we can manufacture some philosophy. That is nonsense. Philosophy is one; religion is one. Everyone has to follow. There is no alternative. Not "Whatever you like, you can do." No. *Mām ekam*—simply Kṛṣṇa.

Some missionaries say that you can manufacture your own way of worship and whatever you accept, that is all right. These bogus things are not accepted by the *ācāryas.*

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.3.28) states, *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam,* "Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead." Do you want to understand who Bhagavān is? He is Kṛṣṇa.

## The Supreme Controller

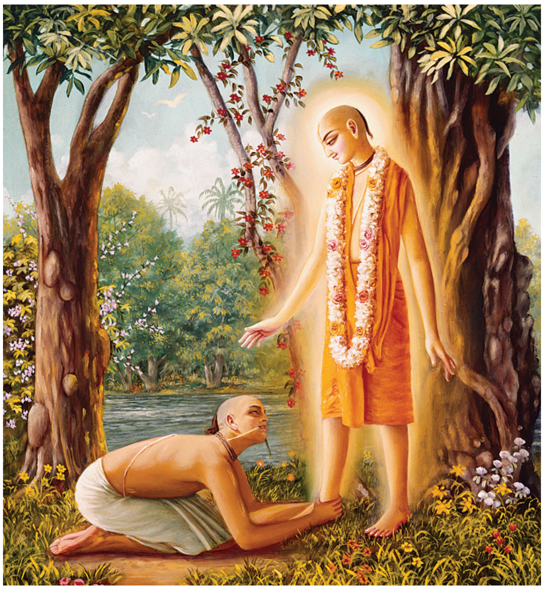
Religion means to understand Bhagavān. The other day we were consulting a dictionary and we read that religion means the process by which we can understand the supreme controller. There is a supreme controller, as in every department, every state, every affair, every business, every institution there is a controller. You have practical experience of that. Without a controller nothing can be properly discharged. A controller is required.

The Sanskrit word for controller or ruler is *īśvara.* There are different kinds of controllers according to time and sphere. In your country the President is the controller. In another country somebody else is the controller. There are many hundreds and thousands of planets within this universe, and on every planet there is a controller. On the sun planet there is a controller. His name is Vivasvān. On the moon planet there is a controller. On every planet there is a controller. Above all of them is the supreme controller of the universe, named Brahmā, and there are many millions of *brahmāṇḍas,* or universes. So there are many controllers. But Kṛṣṇa is described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.1) as the supreme controller: *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ.* There are many controllers, but the supreme controller is Kṛṣṇa.

In the same *Brahma-saṁhitā* verse His form is described: *sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ.* He has an eternal form of bliss and knowledge. *Vigrahaḥ* means form. Bhagavān has a form. You see Kṛṣṇa's form here as the deity. But His form is different from ours. He's *sac-cid-ānanda.* His form is eternal; our present form, this body, is not eternal. We have to give it up. We have to accept another form according to our karma. But Kṛṣṇa hasn't got to do that. He is in His original form. He has many forms and expansions, but His original form is Kṛṣṇa with two hands and a flute.

The *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.30) states:

*veṇuṁ kvaṇantam aravinda-*
*dalāyatākṣaṁ*
*barhāvataṁsam asitāmbuda-*
*sundarāṅgam*
*kandarpa-koṭi-kamanīya-viśeṣa-*
*śobhaṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣam tam ahaṁ*
*bhajāmi*


Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

*Sanātana Gosvāmī approaches Lord Caitanya with the traditional gesture of humility.*

"I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is adept in playing on His flute, with blooming eyes like lotus petals, with head decked with peacock's feather, with the figure of beauty tinged with the hue of blue clouds, and His unique loveliness charming millions of Cupids." Kṛṣṇa is always represented as playing on His flute. And *barhāvataṁsa*—a peacock feather adorns His head. These features are described in the Vedic literature. It is not that we worship Kṛṣṇa as an imaginary form of God. No. The Māyāvādīs, or impersonalists, say that you can imagine any form of God. No, that is not the fact. God has His original form, His real form: *sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ.*

Kṛṣṇa cannot be understood very easily. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.3) Kṛṣṇa says,

*manuṣyāṇāṁ sahasreṣu*
*kaścid yatati siddhaye*
*yatatām api siddhānāṁ*
*kaścin māṁ vetti tattvataḥ*

"Out of many millions of persons, one is interested in how to become *siddha.*" *Siddha* means liberated. One who is not entangled with this material atmosphere is called *siddha.* So out of many millions of people, one may be interested in how to become free from this material entanglement. And out of many such *siddhas* (*yatatām api siddhānām*), one may understand Kṛṣṇa (*kaścin māṁ vetti tattvataḥ*).

## Kṛṣṇa Shows The Way

It is not so easy to understand Kṛṣṇa, but when Kṛṣṇa comes personally as a devotee and shows us the ways and means to approach Kṛṣṇa, then it becomes easier. That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu. If we follow the method prescribed by Kṛṣṇa, it is very easy to understand Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, if we go through the mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, then we can easily understand Kṛṣṇa.

That was recognized by Rūpa Gosvāmī, the younger brother of Sanātana Gosvāmī. Both of them were ministers. Rūpa Gosvāmī has described,

*namo mahā-vadānyāya*
*kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te*
*kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-*
*nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ*

"O most munificent incarnation! You are Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing

## What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya's movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

## Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in ev**a**de, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hed**ge-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

## Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean "servant." For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means "servant of Kṛṣṇa."

as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You have assumed the golden color of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and You are widely distributing pure love of Kṛṣṇa. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You." (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 19.53)

Rūpa Gosvāmī said, "Caitanya Mahāprabhu, You are Kṛṣṇa. Now, this time, You have appeared as Kṛṣṇa Caitanya to give everyone Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa made some condition. *Sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*: 'Surrender to Me.' [Bg. 18.66] But here now, as a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, You are distributing Kṛṣṇa without any condition. Therefore You are the most munificent incarnation: *mahā-vadānyāya.*"

Somehow or other, Sanātana Gosvāmī became attracted to Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He resigned his ministerial post and came to surrender to Caitanya Mahāprabhu at Benares.

**The moving power of the body is the spirit soul. We are repeatedly trying to convince people of this simple truth.**

When we approach a guru, the first condition is that we must be humble and surrender. Then we must serve the spiritual master to gain his favor. This is the process. Sanātana Gosvāmī is teaching how to approach a guru—very humbly. In India, traditionally the symbolic representation of humbleness was to take a piece of grass in one's mouth. Then it was understood that one was coming very submissively. Now this system is not current, but formerly it was. Caitanya Mahāprabhu has also instructed us,

*tṛṇād api sunīcena*
*taror api sahiṣṇunā*
*amāninā mānadena*
*kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

"One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street; one should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige, and should be ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly." (*Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka* 3)

## Dull-Headed Times

This time, Kali-yuga, is very, very fallen. People are very, very fallen. Practically cent percent of the population at the present moment are *manda. Manda* means of no value, or very bad, or very slow. There are several meanings of *manda.* In this age all the people are *manda.* And *sumanda-matayo:* Because they are generally very bad, everyone has his own process of spiritual realization.

First of all they are not interested, *manda.* The real value of the human being is spiritual understanding. Human life is meant for spiritual understanding. *Athāto brahma jijñāsā:* "Inquire into the Absolute Truth." That is the only business of human life. But on account of being *manda,* we have invented so many other occupational duties. That is a fact—not just according to Vaiṣṇava philosophy, but that is a fact. We may improve the standard of our living condition, but our living condition is about the bodily concept of life. I am sitting on this comfortable *siṁhāsana,* or seat. But I can sit down on the floor. It does not make much difference.

We are a combination of spirit and matter. This body is matter, and the force moving this body is the spirit soul. Because we are *manda,* we are so dull that the even highest learned man and the so-called scientist and philosopher cannot understand this distinction. They think this body is everything. But that is not the fact. The body is not everything. The moving power of the body is the spirit soul. We are repeatedly trying to convince people of this simple truth, but they are so dull-headed they cannot understand.

They have been described as animals. The *śāstra* says,

*yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape*
*tri-dhātuke*
*sva-dhīḥ kalatrādiṣu bhauma*
*ijya-dhīḥ*
*yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ salile na karhicij*
*janeṣv abhijñeṣu sa eva go-kharaḥ*

"A human being who identifies the body made of three elements as the self, who considers the by-products of the body to be his kinsmen, who considers the land of his birth worshipable, and who goes to a place of pilgrimage simply to bathe rather than to meet men of transcendental knowledge there, is to be considered like a cow or an ass." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.84.13) One who is in the bodily concept of life thinks, "I was born in America, or I was born in India, so it is my country." But how long will you remain in America? How long will you remain in India? They do not know. But they are mad after this conception of life, the bodily conception of life.

*Yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ salile:* People in every religious community want to go to their holy place. They go and they take bath. In India they go to Hardwar or Vrindavan or Prayag and take bath in the Ganges or Yamuna. Similarly, Christians go to take bath in the river Jordan. *Janeṣv abhijñeṣu sa eva go-kharaḥ:* This kind of life is *go-kharaḥ. Go* means a cow, and *kharaḥ* means an ass. Without understanding the value of life, without associating with a learned spiritual master, if he passes his life with this understanding then he is no better than the cow and the ass. This is the verdict.

## A Humble, Learned Scholar

Sanātana Gosvāmī was a very learned man in that time. He learned

(*please turn to page 38*)

# Glossary

**Ācārya**—a spiritual master who teaches by example.
**Balarāma**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.
**Battle of Kurukshetra**—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.
**Bhagavad-gītā**—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna. (Cited as *Gītā*.)
**Bhakti**—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.
**Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura**—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.
**Bhakti-yoga**—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.
**Caitanya Mahāprabhu**—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.
**Darśana**—"viewing," audience with a deity or saintly person.
**Dharma**—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).
**Godhead**—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.
**Gurukula**—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").
**Hare Kṛṣṇa**—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.
**ISKCON**—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
**Japa**—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.
**Kali-yuga**—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.
**Karma**—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.
**Kīrtana**—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).
**Kṛṣṇa**—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").
**Mahābhārata**—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.
**Māyā**—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.
**Māyāvādī**—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal.
**Modes of nature**—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.
**Nityānanda**—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
**Prasāda**—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion.
**Purāṇas**—Vedic histories.
**Rādhārāṇī**—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.
**Rathayātrā**—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").
**Sannyāsa**—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.
**Śāstra**—scriptures, especially the Vedic scriptures of India.
**Śrī**—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).
**Śrīla Prabhupāda**—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.
**Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam**—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. (Cited as *Bhāg.*)
**Supersoul**—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.
**Vaiṣṇava**—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).
**Varṇāśrama**—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).
**Vedas**—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.
**Vedic**—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.
**Viṣṇu**—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.
**Vṛndāvana**—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

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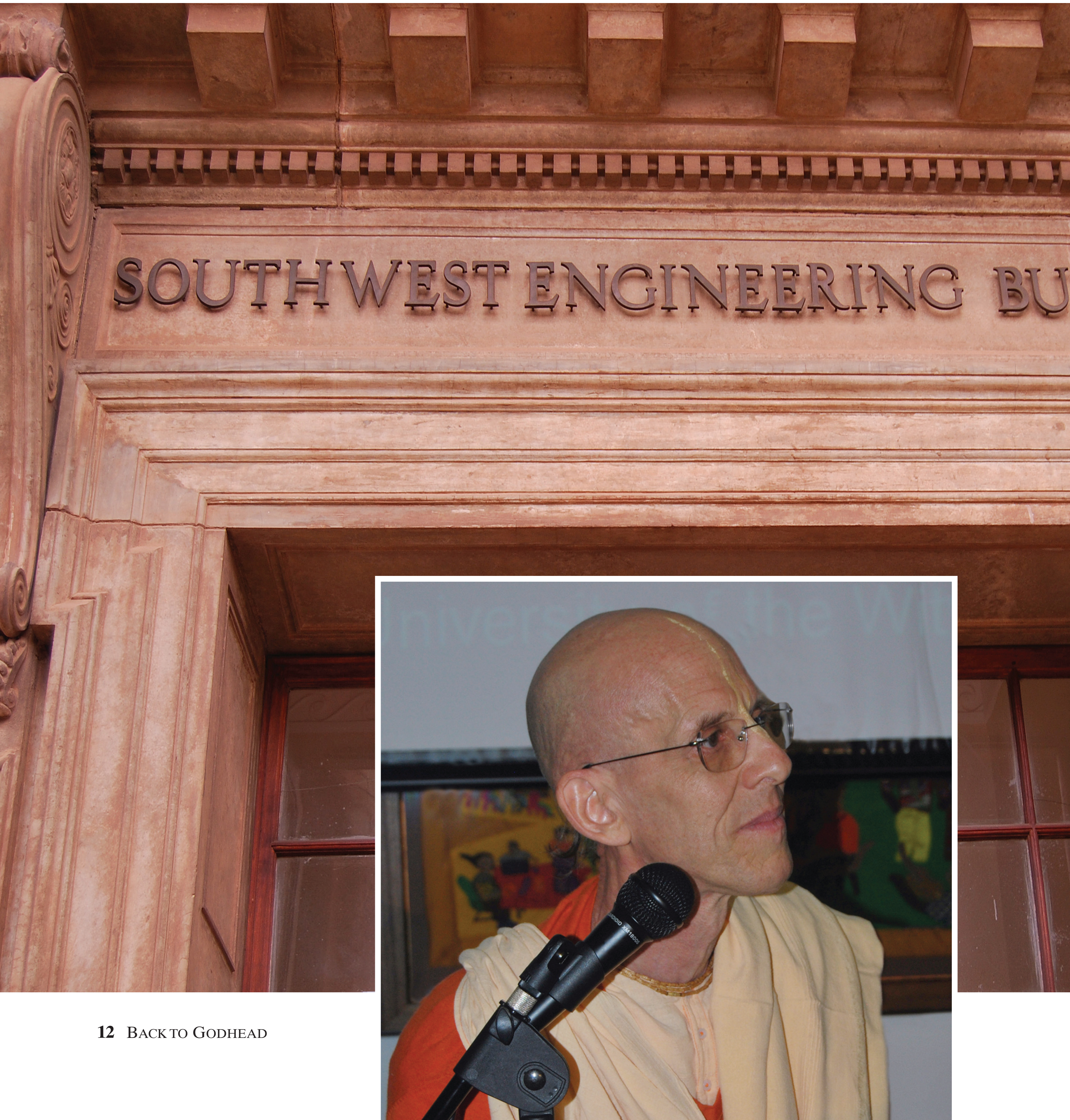
# Where Is Our Educ

## The Bhaktivedanta Swami Lecture, in Honor of His Divine Grace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# ation Leading Us?

## A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

### By Jayādvaita Swami

Photos by Mercier Likwandjandja Bangala

*This is the first annual Bhaktivedanta Swami Lecture, given at Wits University in Johannesburg under the auspices of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust Africa. The lecture was given last March.*

SINCE THIS IS the first Bhaktivedanta Swami Lecture, let me begin by saying something about the person in whose honor it is named—and how what he taught is relevant to our topic today. His name is a long one: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Scholars most often refer to him more briefly as "Bhaktivedanta Swami" or, increasingly these days, by the respectful title by which his followers most often refer to him: Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I first met Śrīla Prabhupāda in New York City in 1968. After a difficult journey on a sea freighter on which he had received free passage, he had come from India to America three years earlier, at the age of 69. He had long since left behind business and family affairs, and after years spent in study and writing, he had now come to America with little more in his possession than a few rupees and some trunkloads of books.

The books were the first three volumes of his translation, with commentary, of a Sanskrit epic known as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* a book revered in India but little known in the West, a book of philosophy, culture, practical knowledge, and, above all, spiritual understanding.

Decades earlier, when Śrīla Prabhupāda was in his twenties, his spiritual master had asked him to teach the message of the *Bhāgavatam*—and other, related writings—in English. So that was what Śrīla Prabhupāda was now doing.

The earliest of these writings, all in Sanskrit, are known as the *Vedas,* and so the tradition of wisdom they represent is known as the Vedic tradition.

The word *veda,* which literally means "knowledge," comes from the Sanskrit root word *vit*—to know—which is related to our English words "wit" and "wisdom."

It was to teach this Vedic wisdom that Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the last ten years of his life, came to New York and later traveled fourteen times around the world (including twice here to South Africa). It was also why he wrote a veritable library of books, with titles now translated into some ninety languages, including French, German, Chinese, Arabic, Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, and Swahili.

So what was this "Vedic wisdom" that Śrīla Prabhupāda had come to teach? Why should we care about it? And what does it have to do with education?

### Education for Dharma —And More

According to the Vedic tradition, education should aim at enabling

*The entrance to the Wits University building where Jayādvaita Swami presented this lecture.*

us to achieve success in four objectives: religion, economic development, the satisfaction of our needs and wants, and finally liberation. This is not political liberation, but something far more important. I'll come back to what that is in a few minutes.

When we speak of the first objective, that of religion, this does not refer to a sectarian dogma or creed. The Sanskrit word here is dharma, and it refers to something broader and deeper.

Dharma refers, first of all, to an essential intrinsic quality, what something or someone is naturally meant to do. The dharma of water is to flow. The dharma of chili, to be hot. The dharma of sugar, to be sweet. And the dharma of a living being, to serve.

The shopkeeper serves the customer. The worker serves the company. The doctor serves the patient. The teacher serves the students (and the parents). The citizen serves the nation. And besides that, or on top of that, we all serve our senses; we serve the demands of our tongue, our ears, our eyes, and so on.

And ultimately our dharma is to serve God. As a hand is part of the body and is therefore meant to serve the whole body, every one of us is a part of God and therefore meant to serve God.

We all serve in some particular occupation, and that is another meaning of dharma. According to our natural leanings and skills, some of us may serve as teachers, some as military or political leaders, some as business people or farmers, some as workers and technicians. The particular service we do is another aspect of our dharma.

While serving, we are meant to follow some basic moral principles: truthfulness, cleanliness, austerity, mercy. This too is an aspect of dharma—a multifaceted term.

And by serving in whatever our occupation, we should naturally achieve the second objective: economic development. We should have a roof over our head, clothes on our back, food on our table, money in our pocket.

*Jayādvaita Swami speaks informally with audience members after the lecture.*

And so we can achieve the third objective: We can satisfy our needs and desires.

## What Does It Mean, "I Am Educated"?

And finally we come again to the fourth objective: liberation. As I mentioned, this is not just political liberation. Rather, it refers to spiritual liberation, the liberation of the soul from material entanglement.

And this is something our modern education wants nothing to do with. Soul? That's something that belongs to religion. What does that have to do with education?

But when the Vedic sages speak of the soul, they're not merely talking about religion. They're speaking of something fundamental, of the most essential object of all inquiry. The Sanskrit word they use is *ātmā,* another word rich in meaning. It can also be translated as "spirit," or simply as "one's self." To know our *ātmā* is to know who we ultimately are. And how can one be an educated person if one doesn't know who one is, or doesn't even ask? To know what I should do with my life, I should first know who I am. And so the ancient Greek aphorism: "Know thyself."

What is this "self"?

For the Vedic view we can turn to the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the celebrated book of wisdom spoken by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. There, in Sanskrit, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says,

*nāsato vidyate bhāvo*
*nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ*
*ubhayor api dṛṣto 'ntas*
*tv anayos tattva-darśibhiḥ*

"That which lasts is unchanging, and that which changes never lasts. Those who are seers of the truth have ascertained this by studying the ultimate nature of both."

My body is always changing. At birth my body was that of a baby, and then I grew up and my body was that of a child, then that of a youth, and now I have the body of an older man. But while I have been changing from body to body, like a person putting on different clothes, I have always been the same person. What lasts throughout all these changes is the fact of my consciousness.

And so, the Vedic sages say, I am not my body. I am the spark of consciousness within the body.

This way of thinking is not merely theoretical. It has consequences, social, political, economic, and personal.

When I identify with my body I think, "I am white" or "I am colored" or "I am black." "I am Zulu" or "I am Xhosa." "I am American" or "I am South African."

But the conscious self within the body is neither white nor colored nor black, neither Zulu nor Xhosa, neither American nor South African. For that matter, neither man nor woman.

And therefore when I think of myself—and others—only in terms of the outward body, not considering the inner self, I am in illusion, in ignorance.

And if I'm in ignorance, what does it mean to say I am educated?

**When I think of myself only in terms of the outward body, not considering the inner self, I am in illusion, in ignorance.**

Once Śrīla Prabhupāda was invited to speak at MIT, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, one of the finest of American schools of higher learning. And to the students and professors who had gathered to hear him, this is what he said:

"I see that in this institute you have so many departments of knowledge—chemistry, biology, astronomy, physics—but where is that department to study the difference between a living body and a dead body? Within the living body is the force of consciousness. Within the dead body that consciousness is gone, and no one can bring it back.

"The living body moves and acts because of consciousness, and therefore within the body, consciousness is the most essential element. Where is the department to study *that*?"

But of course there was no such department. We study nature, we study the world, but we don't study the conscious force that moves the world. We don't study the self. Instead, we just take it for granted that the self and the body are the same. We misidentify the self with the body—"I am white," "I am black," "I am American," "I am South African"—and on top of that illusion we build up our education, our science, our lives, our societies.

And so we focus on that which is changing, and we lose sight of that which lasts.

And when I think, in effect, "I am this body," I think of that which is related to my body—or that which I can grab for it—as mine: My land, my slaves or workers, my gold, my diamonds, my colonies, my empire.

If something is mine, it is not yours. And so we compete for it, each of us trying to hold on to what we have and get our hands on what we don't.

And this leads to conflict, to exploitation and injustice, to hatred and cruelty and brutality, and to rioting and war.

Or else we form partnerships and alliances. Why should this be mine or yours? Let's call it ours and divide it fairly. This is what Śrīla Prabhupāda called "thieves dividing honestly."

What factually belongs to us? The land was here before we came, and it will still be here when we are gone. So too the people, the gold, the diamonds, the empires. How then are they ours?

And if we claim as our own what is not ours, are we not thieves? And how will thieves divide their stolen goods honestly?

According to the *Īśopaniṣad,* a Vedic text:

*īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvam*
*yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat*
*tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā*
*mā gṛdhaḥ kasya svid dhanam*

"Everything within the universe, whether animate or inanimate, belongs to the person who ultimately controls them—that is, to the Supreme Lord. We should therefore accept only what we need for ourselves, what is set aside as our quota, and we should not grasp for other things, knowing well to whom they belong."

When I own and control something, I say that it's mine: my wallet, my cell phone, my dog, my car, my home. But whatever I call mine is factually only on loan. It is "mine" for a while, but not more.

Even my body—which I certainly say is mine—is mine only for some time. And even then, I can't fully control it. I can't, for example, stop it from getting old, nor from dying. So finally the grave or the funeral pyre takes it and says, "It's mine."

The person who's factually in knowledge, Kṛṣṇa tells us, sees every human being—in fact, all beings—with an equal eye.

Yet here I am, thinking "I am this body" and claiming that whatever I can hold on to is mine. And because I can show a diploma, I am an educated person.

The architects of apartheid were certainly highly educated persons, and so too those who enforced it, but not from the Vedic point of view, because they were acting in the bodily concept of life. And that means ignorance.

The *Īśopaniṣad* says, "Those who follow a life of ignorance go downward, into darkness, and still further into darkness go those engaged in the cultivation of knowledge."

In other words, having wrong-headed knowledge, wrong-headed education, is worse than having none at all. This isn't to say that one shouldn't be educated, but education should make a person finer, not more foolish or more vicious.

## Equal Vision

The person who is factually in knowledge, Kṛṣṇa tells us, sees every human being—in fact, all beings that live—with an equal eye.

When we see that the body is but an outward covering of the self and we see that the true self is the spark of consciousness within, then we can come to this true equality of vision. And this is the vision of the truly educated person.

Such a person can factually attain liberation in the spiritual sense of the term—liberation from the illusions of material existence.

This doesn't require that one give up one's family or give up one's work. Rather, it calls for a change in understanding, a change in vision: from material ("I am this body") to spiritual ("I am the lasting spark of consciousness within, and all living beings have the same spiritual nature").

When the Vedic wisdom speaks of "all living beings," it offers a vision in which goodwill and fellowship are to be extended not only to all other people—white, black, or whatever—but even to the animals, to the birds, to the fish, to the trees and plants—to all beings that live.

They too have consciousness. They too have life.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that the learned person, the truly educated person, sees with equal vision the teacher, the cow, the elephant, the dog, and even a person who eats dog meat. Outwardly, these are all certainly different, but he sees within them all the same spark of life.

And so, Kṛṣṇa says, "By seeing that all other living beings are the same in essence as oneself, the learned person sees the true oneness of all living beings, both in their happiness and in their distress. Such a person is genuinely connected with God."

I want to be happy, and so too do all other living beings. And just as I feel pain, so too do all others. Why then should I not want all other living beings to be happy? And why should I cause any other living being needless pain?

And so the Vedic aphorism, *sarve sukhino bhavantu:* "May there be happiness for all."

In practical terms, this implies a change of diet, from a diet that relies on cruelty and slaughter to a diet gentle and humane. To inflict pain and suffering on millions of animals through wholesale slaughter and then to expect friendship, peace, and tranquility among human beings is to live in a fool's dream.

According to the Vedic wisdom, one result will come to us when we follow a life of ignorance—that is, of supposed knowledge that fails to go beyond the bodily concept of life—and a very different result when we cultivate a life of true knowledge, knowledge that begins with an understanding of our own spiritual nature and the spiritual nature of all living beings.

And so the *Īśopaniṣad* says that one should gain both material knowledge and spiritual knowledge side by side. In this way, one can go beyond material existence —beyond even death—and enjoy what the *Īśopaniṣad* calls "the nectar of immortality."

## Creating Our Future

For the body there is no question of immortality, and for the conscious self within the body there is no possibility of death. This is what the Vedic sages have seen by carefully considering the ultimate nature of both: both matter and spirit, both the body and the conscious self.

In the Vedic view, since the conscious self is immortal, after the death of the body it continues to exist. As we change bodies from that of a child to that of a youth to that of a person in old age, so at the time of death we move on to a new body, in another lifetime, in a continuous cycle of birth and death.

Now I am present in this room, and now you can see me, but it's not that I popped into existence only when I entered the room. Nor is it that when I leave this room and you no longer see me I will cease to exist. Before coming to this room, I was present somewhere else, in another room, and when I leave here I will go somewhere else.

And so it is with consciousness, with the self. Now here we are, in our present bodies, but before we must have been elsewhere. And when we leave, again we must go somewhere else.

No one can create consciousness—no engineer, no scientist—nor can anyone destroy it. So what happens to it? According to the Vedic view, it always exists, and it travels from one life to the next, being born, living out a lifetime, and then dying and moving on to the next.

And so it is that we are born into different circumstances, sometimes rich, sometimes poor, sometimes healthy, sometimes diseased. Our circumstances in this life result from our actions in the life before, and our actions in the present life create the life we will have next, much as what we do in grade school might make us eligible to enter a certain sort of college and how seriously we apply ourselves in college makes a difference when we enter the job market. By our present actions we create our future. And all that we do in the present life is summed up at the time of our death.

This is a large topic, which time prevents us from pursuing here in much detail. But it is worthy of our further study because the ultimate problem of human life is not one of those problems we find in our newspaper headlines. It is the problem each of us must deal with, to which all the sages of the world direct our thoughts: the problem of death—and what, in the face of it, each of us should do.

## The Education We Need

Earlier in this talk, I mentioned that according to the Vedic tradition, education should aim at enabling us to achieve success in four objectives: religion (or dharma), economic development, the satisfaction of our needs and wants, and finally liberation.

In the Vedic view, the ultimate goal is liberation, and the other three objectives are steppingstones along the way. Through dharma, leading a moral life while working in a suitable occupation, we earn what we require to satisfy our needs and wants, so that we can pursue an understanding of our ultimate purpose in life and taste, as the *Īśopaniṣad* says, "the nectar of immortality." That is the ideal of Vedic education.

Vedic education endeavors not to stuff a child with knowledge but, above all, to build character, to instill the values of cleanliness, truthfulness, austerity, and mercy. It promotes economic development especially through a simpler way of life, in which we make proper use of nature's gifts and live in harmony with nature. In this way it enables us to meet our needs, and it teaches us the art of being satisfied with what nature gives us, and not trying to scheme and exploit and bully our way into trying to get more, at the expense of the lives and happiness of others. And it keeps always in view that our present life is temporary and

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The Sunday Feast

Most Hare Kṛṣṇa centers around the world put on a special festival every Sunday—for regulars as well as newcomers. Come by and get a taste of the world's oldest cultural tradition. Call your nearest center to find out the schedule for the Sunday Feast.

(See "Centers," pages 59–61, or visit directory.krishna.com.)

that its true purpose lies in spiritual realization.

But education as we know it today? Quite a different story. Morality and personal character are of little concern. And liberation is out of the picture. The focus is squarely on economic development—on making money. And for this our education trains leaders to build an over-industrialized world where millions of people can toil in mines and factories so that a few can live in luxury (with a middle class in between to serve as emerging target markets and consumer units). With such an education, we focus on meeting our needs and wants, and not only meeting them but expanding them, in the expectation that the more we get, the happier we will be.

This expectation is false, so the education we receive is a false one, leading us on to work like donkeys, with the carrot of happiness always dangled before our face at every step, sure to be ours if only we can just catch up with it.

Our poster for this evening's program mentioned that the World Economic Forum ranked South Africa's educational system as one of the world's worst: of 144 countries, number 140.

And a year ago Mamphela Ramphele said, famously, that South Africa's educational system is worse today than the "gutter education" the country had under the apartheid government.

But suppose that by some miracle of good government and educational reform—now we're really talking miracles—South Africa's educational system were to move up from the bottom of the list and join the ranks if not of Switzerland, Finland, and Singapore (numbers one, two, and three) at least of the United Kingdom and the United States (numbers 27 and 28).

Śrīla Prabhupāda would say that this miraculously transformed educational system would still be a grand failure. Why? Because it would still be built on ignorance, on mistaking the body for the self, and on making the gratification of our bodily demands—the needs for eating, sleeping, mating, and defense—the central focus of our life.

The animals know of no higher purposes in life than to eat, to sleep, to defend themselves, and to have sex. Of course, as human beings we share these same needs. But human life is meant for a higher purpose. We may eat more nicely than the animals—in a restaurant or a hotel—we may sleep in a more comfortable bed, we may defend ourselves with guns and missiles instead of teeth and claws, and we may have sex with the aid of condoms and pills. And that may make us better animals, more polished animals, more sophisticated animals. But it doesn't make us more than animals.

**We need an education that teaches us how to work in harmony with nature, not against it, by living a simpler life.**

And human beings living as no more than animals will never be truly successful, nor even happy, to say nothing of achieving the ultimate goal of human life.

For that we need a truly higher education, one that begins in childhood and extends throughout one's life, an education that enables us to understand the difference between the temporary body and the permanently existing conscious self. We need an education that enables us to see that whatever exists in this world is not our property, to be fought over or cleverly divided and exploited, but the property of God, the ultimate controller and owner of all. We need an education that teaches us how to work in harmony with nature, not against it, by living a simpler life, meeting our basic needs by depending on nature's gifts. And we need an education that enables us to keep in view the ultimate goal of human life: to rise above what is illusory to what is real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality.

It was to promote this sort of education that Śrīla Prabhupāda journeyed on that freighter to New York, that he came here to South Africa, and that he wrote so many books.

The knowledge found in these books is like gold. And I dare say it's more valuable than all the gold ever found in South Africa. And this gold needs no mines, no exploited workers, no ruinous environmental impact, no international competition. It's pure and beneficial, and it's yours for the taking.

This doesn't involve switching from one religion to another. Whatever our religion, whatever our culture, whatever our race, whatever our nationality, we can take advantage of this knowledge and benefit. Its value is universal, crossing all lines.

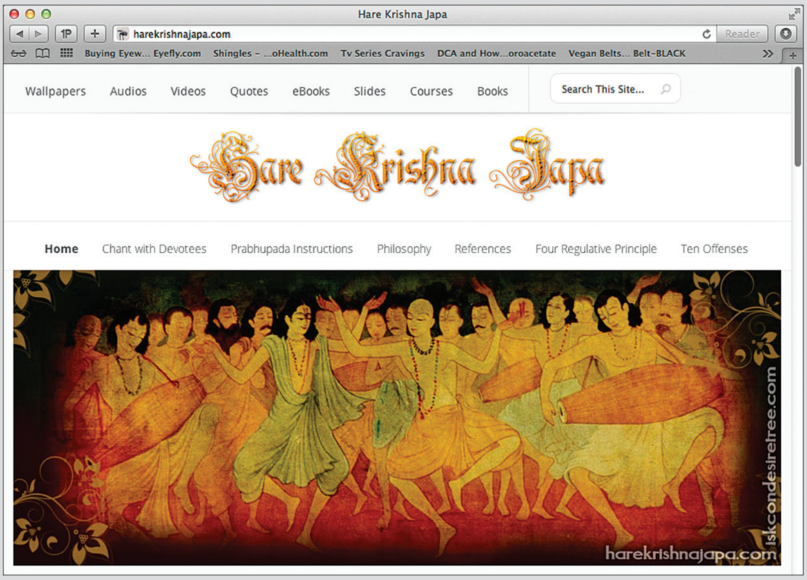
Gold is gold, regardless of where it comes from. There's no question of Russian gold or South African gold, of Hindu gold or Christian or Muslim gold. Wherever we find gold, and from whomever we get it, it always has value. So too with knowledge. The *Bhagavad-gītā* says, "There is nothing so sublime and pure as transcendental knowledge."

"Such knowledge," the *Gītā* says, "is the king of education." And I invite you to give it your open-minded consideration, with the utmost seriousness. ✿

*Jayādvaita Swami, a former editor in chief of* Back to Godhead, *heads the work of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust in Africa. He is currently writing a book-length "cross-cultural commentary" on the biblical book of Ecclesiastes.*

# e-Krishna

## *Profiles of Kṛṣṇa-related websites*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**harekrishnajapa.com** is packed with information about chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. When you view the site, you will hear Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting in the background. Part way down the page, on the right-hand side, you can adjust the volume.

This site has something for old chanters and new ones. It's a great site to share with people who have any interest in chanting.

Like other sites we have reviewed, harekrishnajapa.com needs multiple menus to ensure all the content is easily available to you.

Let's start at the very top. The first link on the top menu, Wallpapers, takes you to a download page. Here there are hundreds of *mahā-mantra* images you can download for free. The images are available in many languages, which you can copy to your computer, email to friends, post on the Internet, or print out and put on your walls.

The next link, Audios, allows you to scroll through eight pages of recordings from lectures and retreats all about chanting *japa.* The recordings are mostly of ISKCON gurus and senior devotees from all over the world. There are thousands of hours of listening nectar here, right at your fingertips.

The Videos link presents you with nearly forty videos all about chanting to help you stay focused on improving your rounds of *japa.*

Follow the Quotes link to a page of interesting quotes about *japa,* mostly from Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Click on the eBooks link and find seven free ebooks you can download and read on your computer or mobile device. Included are *Harināma Cintāmaṇi,* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and *Śrī Nāmāmṛta,* a compilation of Śrīla Prabhupāda's writings on the holy name.

The Slides link reveals a page where you can download seven slideshows that have been used in seminars and classes on chanting the *mahā-mantra,* such as "Improve Chanting" and "Elevating Our Consciousness Through Mantra Meditation."

The Courses link shows you information about the kinds of *japa* retreats held around the world each year, and the Books link allows you to buy a range of books about chanting from Krishna.com.

Just down the page is a second menu, which starts off with a Home link. Wherever you are on the site when you choose this link, it will always bring you back to the home page.

The Chant With Devotees link takes you to a page where you can hear the audio of twenty-four swamis chanting their *japa.* There is also a recording of the late Aindra Dāsa chanting his *japa.* You can listen to their *japa* in the background as you work, or you can chant along.

Links named Prabhupada Instructions, Philosophy, References, Four Regulative Principles, and Ten Offenses take you to quotes from Śrīla Prabhupāda and others about the basics of chanting *japa* as a regulated practice.

In the middle of the page are three columns with links that reveal even more information to assist you in your chanting practice. The links here are categorized under the headings About Japa, Japa Technique, and Japa FAQ.

Further down is the Japa Blog, where new articles about *japa* appear from time to time.

A little further down again, you will see a list of the latest blogs, videos, and wallpapers posted for your information and pleasure. This website could keep you busy for some time.

—*Antony Brennan*

# SATISFACTION

## —Only a Mantra Away

*The Rolling Stones couldn't find it because they didn't know where to look.*

By Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī

BACK IN THE sixties, when I was eleven years old my father changed jobs and we moved from the quiet, subdued island town of Oak Harbor, Washington, to a suburb between Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. My new friends didn't play with Barbie dolls or jump rope like I was used to; they hung out together listening to popular music, smoking cigarettes, and drinking beer stolen from their parents.

I wanted to fit in and be accepted, so, among other things, I gave up listening to my beloved Beatles and started to listen to the Rolling Stones. Unlike the Beatles, the Rolling Stones portrayed a bad-boys image. In the beginning I found their music abrasive and harsh, but I listened anyway, and the lyrics pulled me out of my pre-pubescent innocence. The Rolling Stones' top-of-the-charts recording "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" haunted me. The words played over and over in my head like an involuntary negative affirmation.

The lyrics ushered me into my teens as I distanced myself from my family and entered deeper into the counter-culture psyche. I listened to other bands with loud, whining electric guitars and pounding drums, but their lyrics didn't have the same impact as "Satisfaction."

Yamarāja Dāsa

My worldview changed forever as I pondered the plight of remaining endlessly dissatisfied in my life. I would look at others and see through their thin veneer of success and happiness and detect a profound lack of fulfillment. People weren't happy, and neither was I. Over the next few years I searched for satisfaction in academics, food, relationships, entertainment, and psychedelic drugs. But in the background of all my pursuits were the lingering lyrics "I can't get no satisfaction."

One day an internal voice asked, "How could anyone feel satisfied without meaning and purpose in life?" I had never considered this simple, common sense question before. It changed the course of my search. I felt confident that if I could find an answer to that question, I would find satisfaction as a byproduct.

After some time I had the good fortune to be introduced to the path of *bhakti.* Since I always believed in a personal God, *bhakti's* goal of life—to love and serve God—resonated with me. I was charmed by the Vedic descriptions of

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God as an eternal beautiful youth playing with His friends in a pastoral paradise. I was also attracted to the *bhakti* way of reaching the Supreme Person: by hearing about Him through revealed texts, chanting His names in quiet meditation and congregationally, praying to Him, and serving Him in His deity form.

## The Source of Dissatisfaction

After moving into a community of *bhakti* practitioners, I began to study the scriptures in more depth. One day I came upon a verse in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (17.16) wherein Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that satisfaction—along with simplicity, gravity, self-control, and purification of one's existence—is an austerity of the mind. As an austerity in the mode of goodness, it helps one progress spiritually. I found Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to the verse edifying: "The more we think of sense enjoyment, the more the mind becomes dissatisfied. In the present age we unnecessarily engage the mind in so many different ways for sense gratification, and so there is no possibility of the mind's becoming satisfied."

When I read this, the Rolling Stones' song came back to me. I'm sure that Mick Jagger, singing about his own dissatisfaction, wasn't trying to convey an eternal truth from the *Gītā.* But he was expressing a universal feeling, and his words resonated deeply with the youth of the sixties. Even today many young people know the song. The aging Rolling Stones are still playing it, but apparently haven't changed the way they live. If they were serious about finding satisfaction, they'd look beyond sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll—or, for that matter, beyond anything this world has to offer.

## Time to Stop Chewing

Most people seem to be doing the same things over and over again and expecting different results. A materialistic person extracts all the juice from the objects of the senses but continues trying, in vain, to obtain some pleasure. Prahlāda Mahārāja, a great devotee of the Lord, describes this phenomenon as chewing the chewed. If you chew on sugar cane you get sweet juice, but once the juice is gone, it's time to stop chewing.

The revealed scriptures relate many stories of people pursuing their spiritual life and of people averse to serving God. One person who opposed God was Prahlāda Mahārāja's father, Hiraṇyakaśipu, an incredibly powerful king who possessed great wealth and beautiful women. He had everything imaginable with which to enjoy his senses. Still his mind was tormented, and his efforts to satisfy his desires were like a man trying to quench his thirst by drinking sand. On the other hand, his son Prahlāda had great devotion for the Lord, and his mind was pure and peaceful, even in the presence of his irate homicidal father.

At every moment we all have to decide whether to follow in the footsteps of the angelic, godly Prahlāda Mahārāja or those of the atheistic materialist Hiraṇyakaśipu. Most devotees, especially in their beginning stages of *bhakti,* can recognize both godly and atheistic tendencies in their heart. Both material and spiritual pursuits give pleasure, but the pleasure from material sense objects is fleeting and temporary. Our senses naturally tire of mundane sense objects. When that happens, we may renounce sense pleasure for some time, but after a respite, we try again. For our own benefit, we need to be convinced that ultimately material pleasures lead to suffering.

On the other hand, spiritual sense gratification—or satisfaction of our spiritual senses—lasts forever. Not only is it eternal, but the pleasure is ever increasing. In the beginning of our spiritual journey we might not have much taste for spiritual practices, since the mind and senses may still be attached to material objects. But the more we practice, the more the senses and mind become purified of affection for the ephemeral world and our natural taste for spiritual practices surfaces.

## Engage The Mind

Prabhupāda continues his purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 17.16 by offering a solution to the mind's dissatisfaction: Absorb the mind in hearing about the Lord's activities and adventures. When we divert our mind from contemplating sense objects to contemplating the Lord's pastimes, it becomes purified and pacified.

In the beginning, spending our discretionary time hearing Kṛṣṇa's pastimes may require us to muster some self-control. For example, many of us grew up with television as our main form of entertainment. We became accustomed to flicking a switch or pushing a button on a remote to enter another reality and, for some time, to forget the pressures and discomforts of our life. But viewing someone becoming happy in materialistic pursuits will only prolong the illusion of finding satisfaction in the world of matter. It will make *māyā* seem real and Kṛṣṇa the illusion. Watching media that glorifies a life in this temporary existence will also

**Prahlāda Mahārāja had great devotion for the Lord, and his mind was pure and peaceful, even in the presence of his irate homicidal father.**

diminish our taste for hearing about Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda says that satisfaction depends on acting without duplicity or deceit. We can unpack this statement by understanding that deceitful behavior often results from a desire to control a situation. We learn from the *Bhagavad-gītā* that a devotee should work honestly and depend on Kṛṣṇa for the result. But if we are attached to a particular outcome, we may lose sight of this principle and try to manipulate the circumstance by dishonest means.

On the other hand, when we are straightforward in our dealings with others, we gain their trust and have more meaningful, satisfying relationships. When Śrīla Prabhupāda was working in Dr. Bose's chemical laboratory in Calcutta, he was promoted to manage the company over many senior workers. Dr. Bose chose Śrīla Prabhupāda because he was trustworthy, a quality Dr. Bose considered more important than years of experience in the chemical industry.

## Working for Others' Benefit

The last thing Śrīla Prabhupāda advises in his purport as a means to become satisfied is to work for the welfare of others. Practically everyone knows the feeling of being more satisfied with giving than with taking. The ultimate welfare work is to give others a chance to connect with Kṛṣṇa. We can do that in many ways, such as conducting Kṛṣṇa conscious home programs, distributing books, writing articles and books, speaking to others, and chanting in public—there are as many ways as there are minds.

Any devotee who has sincerely tried to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others can attest to feeling deeply satisfied and enlivened by such activities. The pleasure comes from pleasing the dearest servants of the Lord, who, happy to see us serving Him in that way, reciprocate with our efforts by giving us a taste of the transcendent reality.

Now by some inexplicable good fortune, I live a satisfying and fulfilling life. Instead of hearing "I can't get no satisfaction" playing in my head, I now hear the lyrics "Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare" in a wide variety of melodies.

Rūpa Gosvāmī, a sixteenth-century Vaiṣṇava saint and scholar, wrote the following verse to describe the effects of hearing and singing this song: "I do not know how much nectar the two syllables 'Kṛṣ-ṇa' have produced. When the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is chanted, it appears to dance within the mouth. We then desire many, many mouths. When that name enters the holes of the ears, we desire many millions of ears. And when the holy name dances in the courtyard of the heart, it conquers the activities of the mind, and therefore all the senses become inert." (*Śrī Vidagdha-mādhava* 1.15) ❁

*Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī was initiated by Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1976. She lives with her husband in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, where she works as a psychotherapist.*

LOOKING FOR NEWS OF THE HARE KṚṢṆA MOVEMENT?

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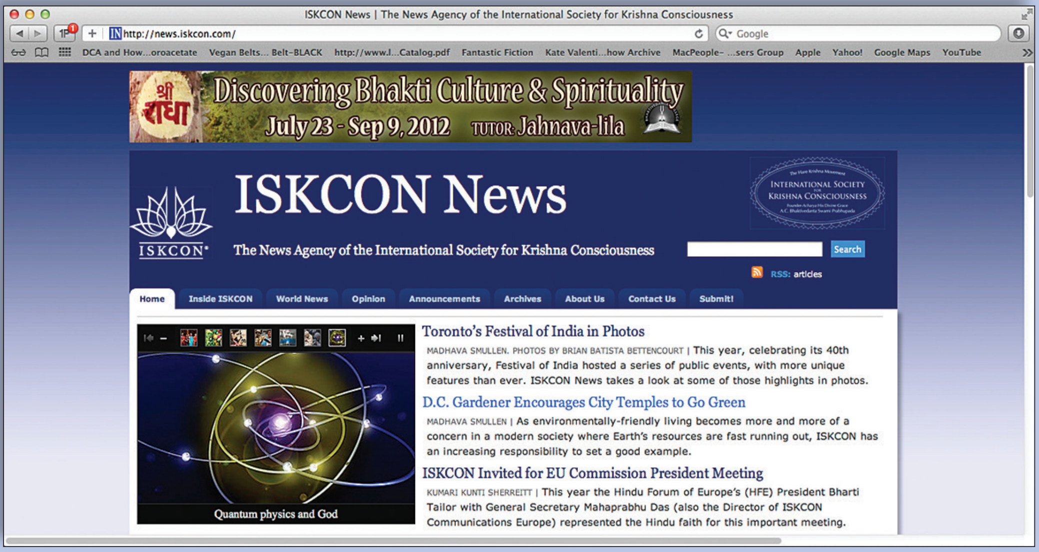
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Quantum physics and God

Toronto's Festival of India in Photos

MADHAVA SMULLEN. PHOTOS BY BRIAN BATISTA BETTENCOURT | This year, celebrating its 40th anniversary, Festival of India hosted a series of public events, with more unique features than ever. ISKCON News takes a look at some of those highlights in photos.

D.C. Gardener Encourages City Temples to Go Green

MADHAVA SMULLEN | As environmentally-friendly living becomes more and more of a concern in a modern society where Earth's resources are fast running out, ISKCON has an increasing responsibility to set a good example.

ISKCON Invited for EU Commission President Meeting

KUMARI KUNTI SHERREITT | This year the Hindu Forum of Europe's (HFE) President Bharti Tailor with General Secretary Mahaprabhu Das (also the Director of ISKCON Communications Europe) represented the Hindu faith for this important meeting.

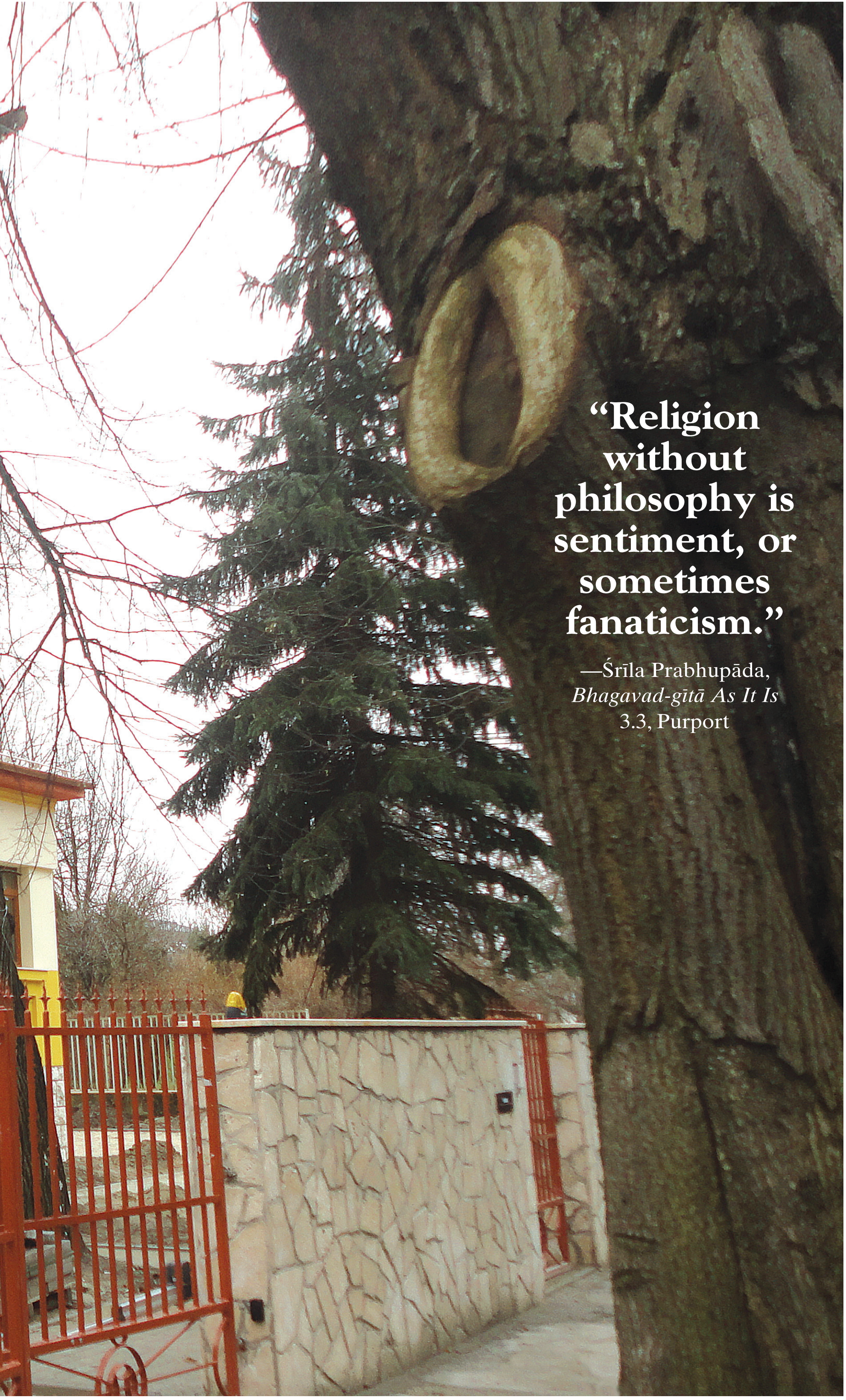
*The Internet is the ideal place for timely news, and iskcon.com, run by ISKCON Communications, maintains an active news page. So whether you want to see what's happening in ISKCON or have some news to report, log on to www.news.iskcon.com.*

# THE COLLEGE of the KNOWLEDGE of LOVING DEVOTION

*Bhaktivedanta College in Budapest, Hungary, offers EU-accredited college degrees in yoga and Vaiṣṇava theology.*

By Mahārāṇī Devī Dāsī
and Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī

THE FOOD IS fantastic, the music melodic, the dancing delightful. Entranced and enthralled with the Kṛṣṇa devotional practices, people from cultures throughout the world visit Hare Kṛṣṇa restaurants, festivals, and programs. Yet many guests might not guess at the depth of ancient knowl-



> “Religion without philosophy is sentiment, or sometimes fanaticism.”
>
> —Śrīla Prabhupāda, *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* 3.3, Purport

edge that informs and enlivens these celebratory practices, perhaps even assuming that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is some new or invented road to enlightenment. Perhaps some people ignore their curiosity and avoid taking part in Kṛṣṇa conscious programs out of concern that they would be part of something without foundation.

Such ignorance of the roots of *bhakti-yoga* is not new. About five hundred years ago, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who inaugurated the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in the modern age, traveled throughout India singing the holy names of the Lord while dancing in the streets with His associates. At that time, some leading scholars assumed that such public singing and dancing was only sentimental, without any deep knowledge of theology, philosophy, and scripture.

Śrī Caitanya gracefully and humbly challenged these scholars, showing them that His own depth of theological and philosophical knowledge far surpassed theirs. The scholars then embraced the path of *bhakti-yoga* that Śrī Caitanya taught, and became His ardent followers. Today in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, besides the chanting, dancing, and feasting there are several centers of serious theological study. One of the most astonishing is in Budapest, Hungary.

## EU Accreditation

A few steps from the Kṛṣṇa temple in Budapest is Bhaktivedanta College, housed in a building fully renovated with government funds. Accredited completely on its own merits, independent of any other institution, the college offers fully EU-recognized Bachelors degrees—a Yoga Master and Vaishnava Theology. It will be a full-fledged university with the start of the upcoming accredited Masters degree in Vaishnava Theology. Most of the money to run the college also comes from the government, so anyone can afford the degree. Before packing up and

*Bhaktivedanta College (left) sits in a quiet, gardenlike suburb of Budapest. Below, students study in the Bhaktivedanta Library.*

moving to Hungary to attend, you should know that instruction at the Budapest campus is conducted in Hungarian, a difficult language to master. English instruction for the Theology B.A. is given at a satellite campus in Helsinki. There is a plan to start offering the Yoga Master B.A. in English in Budapest by 2015–16. Bhaktivedanta College now offers the only B.A. in yoga in all of Europe, and the faculty hope that having the teaching available in English will draw students from throughout the continent and perhaps the world.

As of May 2013, there were 280 registered students in Budapest, 42% in Theology and 58% in Yoga. Eleven students are in Helsinki (all in Theology). Thirty-three students graduated in July 2013.

Most of the students are not ISKCON members, especially in the Yoga Master B.A., but during their studies most of them become devotees or genuinely sympathetic to ISKCON. Recently the college conducted a survey among active students to measure their attitude towards Kṛṣṇa consciousness. At the conclusion of the first year of study, 33% were Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees on some level when they started their studies and remain so or have increased their faith and commitment; 35% who were not Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees at all at the beginning of their studies now consider themselves devotees on some level. Only 32% who started their studies as nondevotees remained nondevotees. By the end of their last (third) year of studies, only 18% of the students do not consider themselves devotees of Kṛṣṇa.

While visiting on a Saturday, one can see hundreds of students eating scrumptious vegetarian *prasāda* at the temple cafe. Indeed, the link between the college and the Budapest temple strengthened after the college building next to the temple was completed. College and temple have united as the Hare Krishna Educational and Cultural Centre Budapest, under a single board of directors. Shared management is an important principle of the college in general, demonstrated in a policy that all full-time teachers must have some managerial position or do administrative work. This policy reduces the distance between teachers and administrative staff and has engendered a deep service attitude among the whole staff.

## Spirtiually Qualified Teachers

The college has eleven full-time and eighteen part-time teachers. Five full-time and four part-time teachers have a Ph.D., and another four are pursuing their Ph.D. studies. Every year the college has two or three guest teachers who visit from around the world. Full-time yoga teachers must be practicing devotees who daily chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra on their beads the minimum times required of initiates in ISKCON. Teachers of theological subjects must also follow ISKCON's regulative principles and be part of the local system of mentorship.

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BHAKTIVEDANTA HITTUDOMÁNYI FŐISKOLA

Spiritual requirements for fulltime teachers are essential to achieve the college's mission: "The purpose of Bhaktivedanta College is to instill in its students faith in pure devotional service and Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is achieved by directly teaching the limbs of pure devotional service, and by also teaching knowledge, though not directly related to pure *bhakti,* like Vedic or contemporary sciences and arts, in a way that ultimately concludes in pure devotion."

In line with this mission, the curriculum serves a double purpose: On the one hand, it ensures the academic training of theologians for the founding organization, the Hungarian Society for Krishna Consciousness (HSKCON). On the other hand, it gives an opportunity for learning in depth about the traditions and contemporary application of Vedic culture and yoga for all those interested, regardless of their denominational background.

## The Bhaktivedanta Library

There's much more to Bhaktivedanta College, however, than just the college itself, even beyond the temple with which it's associated. The Bhaktivedanta Library, a specialized library of printed and digitized publications on Vaishnavism, Hinduism, and Indian and South Asian cultures, will impress any visitor. It has about eighteen thousand documents, and its stock is steadily growing, thanks to private donations and the regular help of the Indian Embassy in Hungary. The college has a unique Indological Library Collection from Ildikó Puskás, one of the most famous Hungarian Indologists. The collection consists of about 3,600 titles beyond the main library collection.

In addition to a library of the work of others, the professors are busy publishing their own books. They have published seventy-six study guides, many college textbooks, and fifteen books. *Tattva*, the academic review of Bhaktivedanta College, has been published since 1998 with one or two issues per year.

To serve the many people who would like knowledge of *bhakti-yoga* without enrolling for a full college degree, in 2005 the college commenced pay courses, including

(*please turn to page 32*)

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे
कौमारम् या

*Bhaktivedanta College yoga teachers put on a demonstration (far left) at a fair at New Vraja-dhama, the Hare Kṛṣṇa farm community in Hungary. Above, students attend a lecture of the Bhagavat-tattva course. At left, a class on Sanskrit.*

HOW I CAME TO KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS

# What Hare Kṛṣṇa Means to Me

*"I have so regretted not better appreciating what was offered to me in Hong Kong so many years before."*

By Mark D. Vickers

MY FIRST CONTACT with ISKCON was in about 1976, when I was fifteen. I had written to Bhaktivedanta Manor in the UK, where I grew up, and they kindly sent me some information. I quickly became fascinated. I could see all these young men and women in the photographs dancing and chanting in ecstasy and was intrigued by what was giving them such happiness. I also remember the exotic smell of what the devotees sent me—it was as if the pamphlets had been in a box of beautiful incense for months.

Although my family was not at all religious, God and worship fascinated me from about the age of seven, when I became a choirboy. By the time I was eleven or twelve, I was sometimes reading lessons in church, and I completed a number of Bible-study correspondence courses. While my school chums were out

*British Army Colonel Mark Vickers in Afghanistan during his final tour of duty.*

kicking a football or going to the local disco, more often than not I would be home studying my Bible or painting. But something drove me to learn more about what I saw at the time as exotic Eastern religions. Why were young people moving towards them? What was it all about? What were these "mantras"? I started to dream of travels to India, to the Far East . . . my spiritual journey was ever broadening.

My father, perhaps despairing of my dreams of the East and of becoming an artist, urged me to try for officer selection for the British Army, enticing me with stories of travel, adventure, and a decent salary to boot. To my surprise I passed the entrance exams, and before I knew it I was attending a Sixth Form boarding school for potential officers, located in a wonderful old English stately home. My mind kept returning to those initial strong impressions I had when I first read about the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. I clearly remember daydreaming many times that one day I would hear devotees chanting and dancing down the long tree-lined driveway to the college, calling me to join them. Part of me really wished it would happen; part of me was frightened that it might—oh, the imagination of youth!

It was only when I started my training at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst that I had some limited opportunity to make my first visits to Bhaktivedanta Manor. That must have been in late 1979. After successfully completing the arduous commissioning course at the age of nineteen, imagine my excitement when told that my first assignment was to Hong Kong in 1980.

## Small Temple, Big Impression

Not long after arriving in that fascinating place, I bought a small brass Kṛṣṇa statue from the army camp's goldsmith. It was inexpensive and simple, but I so wish I still had it. Then to my great joy, one day in 1981 I saw a small sign on an apartment block: "Hare Krishna." I made my way there and rang the bell. I was awed to find this small temple in a ninth-floor apartment (not the elegant temple in central Kowloon that exists now), and I felt much pleasure but also nervousness. It was so small there was no hiding any mistakes or ignorance of protocol.

I started visiting regularly. I would get up early in the morning and in my tropical combat uniform would catch a taxi to the temple whenever I could. I cannot claim that I was attending every day, far from it, but often enough to feel part of the small set-up there. I only remember very few devotees regularly visiting the temple at that time, and it is therefore wonderful to see how much it has now grown.

**I would get up early in the morning and in my tropical combat uniform would catch a taxi to the temple whenever I could.**

Later that year I was enthusiastically informed that Tamāl Krishna Goswami (TKG) wanted me to write an article about "What Hare Kṛṣṇa Means to Me" for submission to this very magazine. Tamāl Krishna Goswami was the resident guru in Hong Kong at that time. He had sat on ISKCON's governing body commission since its inception in 1970, and as one of Śrīla Prabhupāda's most trusted followers had been his personal secretary for the seven months prior to Prabhupāda's passing in 1977. I wanted to do what he asked, but I also knew that because of my career I had to be careful with what I would say. Nevertheless, I agreed to write something, and from my heart. I did so, and photographs were taken in a park in Kowloon, under the personal direction of TKG. The article was never published, and all these years I have thought about it often. Despite all that subsequently passed, I have always felt I still owe TKG this—an article in BTG with the title "What Hare Kṛṣṇa Means to Me."

Sometime after I'd written the article, an excited devotee told me that Tamāl Krishna Goswami wanted to see me in his private room. He was such an important figure in the growth of ISKCON—and now he wanted to see me! The devotee gave me strict instructions on exactly what I should do, and he certainly succeeded in making my heart beat faster by the time I entered.

I remember so clearly seeing TKG sitting there looking at me. After a brief discussion he asked me to give up my career and move into the temple. In my ignorance all I could imagine was being stuck in that small apartment for decades to come.

"I love coming here so much," I said, "but I think I might quickly become bored after a year or two."

I think it was the only time he smiled during this rather formal exchange.

He just looked at me and with a big grin said, "Well, if that's all you're bothered about, you don't need to worry—I will *certainly* keep you busy!"

I said I couldn't do it. I didn't fully appreciate it all. My sincerity was genuine, but I was excited about my new career and knew how proud my parents were of me. How my life would have changed if I had just said yes!

Unfortunately, sometime later I had disagreements over a few issues (not with TKG himself), and that was the end of my association with the devotees. I had been chanting my sixteen rounds and following the regulative principles, and it had been suggested that I should be initiated. I am still waiting for that chance to come once more, as I so regret not having taken initiation at that time. With the added years of maturity, life experience, and hindsight, I can see that whatever misunderstandings there might have been were no more than the result of over-zealous and well-intentioned devotees in a new temple, striving ahead. In following years I have seen similarly well-minded people in all walks of life pushing and cajoling without the experience to realize the adverse and unintended affects such behavior might have on equally strong characters. We all grow and develop over the years, and hopefully we learn.

*Retired Colonel Mark Vickers at home in Thailand today.*

In 1982 I relocated to Germany, then back to UK a couple of years after that.

## A Misunderstanding in Soho

My next attempt at rekindling connections was brief. Some years later I went to the temple in Soho, London, and was invited to join the end of the daily teaching before breakfast. Again I was sincere, but inadvertently must have touched a nerve with a question I posed in all innocence. It didn't go down well. Recently I have been told that there had been some difficult events around that time and perhaps I had just said the wrong thing at the wrong time. What a great shame, but it perhaps shows how careful we must always be with what we say, how we say it, and—if I may respectfully say—also how we react. I wanted to be a devotee, but instead left disappointed.

The years went by, and I became a Buddhist. Despite all of this, my love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and TKG never waivered. But I felt disappointed and lost.

## TKG in BTG

Then, suddenly and mysteriously, in 2002 I decided I must visit Bhaktivedanta Manor that very weekend. I hadn't been there since 1980, and (forgetting the "Soho incident") the last real connection had been in Hong Kong in 1982. It was a strange experience to see the young devotees, and I couldn't help thinking how different my life would have been if I had made a different decision twenty years earlier.

I really enjoyed the visit and walked back to my car feeling elated, but then just before driving away I suddenly got the urge to see if *Back to Godhead* was still being printed. I walked back to the reception area and was told that they only had one back issue. They pointed me to the shop and said I should get the latest copy from there. For some inexplicable reason I was insistent that I didn't want the latest issue but wanted to buy the one back issue they had, despite their protestations. It was only on the way home that I opened it and saw that it was a special memorial edition for Tamāl Krishna Goswami. Even now this sad memory sends shivers down my spine and tears to my eyes. After twenty years, it was as if somehow I was directed to visit again, and then guided to buy that particular issue of BTG. It was as if I *had* to be told that TKG had died. I had always thought that someday I would meet him again.

Maybe I am reading too much into all of this, but for me this is an incredible experience, and ever since then I have so regretted not better appreciating what was offered to me in Hong Kong so many years before.

I bought another copy of the beautiful *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and some other small books, and I felt closer than ever to Kṛṣṇa. My love and sheer wonderment multiplied infinitely. I continued as a Buddhist, but often found myself quietly chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra.*

## A New Career

Skip forward to 2007. I moved to Nepal for three fascinating years. I made one visit to the ISKCON temple in Kathmandu, but closer to home we had our own camp pandit. I made it known to him that even though I was well known to be a Buddhist (indeed, the most senior rank Buddhist in the British army!), I was also devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa. I requested him to make sure that our Kṛṣṇa deity in the camp *mandir* was well cared for and that Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī was celebrated nicely. I was the boss by then and had some say over things. I insisted that Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī be taken as one of our public holidays. We had only a limited number of holidays, and I could decide (within reason) which these should be. My insistence on deleting one of the UK public holidays to celebrate Janmāṣṭamī wasn't universally popular among my British staff.

As my time in Nepal was nearing its end, I decided that thirty-three years in the army was enough and that the time was right for me to leave. I had something of a reputation for being a bit of an oddball—vegetarian for twenty-two years or so, virtually a teetotaler for most of that time, and a Buddhist. I felt I must devote the rest of my life to what in my heart I had always wanted to do: focus on spiritual development—and paint, hopefully using the latter to earn money I could give to good causes. After a final six months on an operational tour in Afghanistan, I retired and immigrated to Taiwan.

I had been a devout Buddhist since 1992 but felt frustrated that I wasn't making more progress. I knew there was more. It seemed I had reached a glass ceiling and couldn't break through. I desperately felt I needed to find a guru with whom I could have a personal relationship. I needed someone to point the direction. Yet despite my endeavors, I could not find what I knew in my heart was out there. I thought of Kṛṣṇa more and more. I subscribed to BTG, started reading *Bhagavad-gītā* once more, and read as much as I could online.

Suddenly, things started dropping into place. I met a couple of wonderful devotee friends online who have been so encouraging, so inspiring, so patient. I found gurus who made time to answer my emails. I saw a direction once more, and this time there were no doubts. Suddenly I was chanting at least sixteen rounds every day, but unlike my attempts in Hong Kong, which sometimes felt like I *had* to do it, now I was, and am, *enjoying* doing it. I am reading the *Bhagavad-gītā* every day, together with other wonderful books of Śrīla Prabhupāda. I have started painting devotional pictures of Kṛṣṇa. I have made contact with the ISKCON temple in Taipei and recently made the couple-of-hours' journey from our home to listen to an inspiring talk by Hari Śauri Dāsa about his experiences with Prabhupāda.

As we chanted, my ignorance and lack of knowledge was all too apparent as I failed to catch the lines to respond in the *kīrtana,* but still I felt at home and sat with a big smile and a heart warmed by Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and the *mahā-mantra.* I chanted full of joy with the other dear devotees, feeling so light and happy and wonderful. Everyone is being so welcoming, and it feels like I am rejoining a family from which I have been absent. This autumn I am determined to achieve another dream—to visit Mayapur and Vrindavan.

In closing I wish to say that despite the ups and downs, and mistakes made along the way, my love for Kṛṣṇa is eternal and this organization of ISKCON, through which Śrīla Prabhupāda so graciously brought the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to so many, must be treasured as the most wonderful jewel that it truly is. ❁

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## COLLEGE

(*continued from page 27*)

Yoga, Vedic Philosophy, Bhagavad-gita, Personal Development, Indian Music, Indian Cooking, and Ayurvedic Training. The length of these courses varies from two to ten weeks. Since 2005, more than three thousand students have enrolled.

### Conferences for Prominent Hungarians

The college is emerging as a leader in the EU in topics related to devotional life and sustainable living. For example, between 1998 and 2004 the college organized a Summer University, an annual summer program at Krishna Valley, a farm in Somogyvámos. Artists, leaders of other religions in Hungary, experts of the electronic media, and well-known advocates of natural and social sciences discussed important natural and social issues during lectures and round-table conferences. Hundreds of people attended each year.

In 2005, the college team replaced the Summer University with an annual conference, known as "Vital Questions Conference," which is one of the official events of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. This conference presents Vaiṣṇava theology and practice as a science, and provides a regular

Japa Workshop

October 19–20, 2013
(Beginning of Kārttika)

Bhakti Bhavan, New Raman Reti,
Alachua, Florida

Conducted by Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples Dhruva Mahārāja Dāsa & Sāmapriyā Dāsī. Attendance is limited to fifty people.

For information and to register, go to:
japaworkshop.eventbrite.com

forum for dialogue both between leaders in science and religion and among religious leaders. It attracts the most distinguished Hungarian scholars, theologians, and decision-makers. Topics in various years were crisis, death, health, human relations, karma and free will, the existence of God, and religious peace and violence. The topic for 2013 will be meditation.

The Bhaktivedanta College is indeed well integrated into Hungarian scientific networks. For example, most of the staff are members of the Hungarian Society of Religious Science as well as the scientific societies related to their fields of study. There is also a regular system of exchange between Bhaktivedanta College and colleges of various faiths in Hungary.

Outside of Hungary, the college has an affiliation agreement with Sardar Patel University in Gujarat and Somaiya University in Mumbai. It is a member of the UN's Academic Achievement program and the EU's ERASMUS network, a student-exchange program. Students can get scholarships from the college for their research, and the bursars present their results at the annual Students' Science Competition.

Certainly no one will dispute the fact that Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees know how to celebrate with their energetic *kīrtanas* of singing and dancing, and the feasts of karma-free food that inevitably follow. Now, as is certainly pleasing to Śrī Caitanya, the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement has a serious presence in the world of theology, philosophy, and transcendent science.

*Mahārāṇī Devī Dāsī (Dr. Banyár Magdolna) is the rector of Bhaktivedanta College and one of the main professors. She has an M.A. in economics and sociology and a Ph.D. in history from Eötvös Loránd University Budapest. Her doctoral thesis was about the social history of ISKCON, especially in Hungary. She has been a member of ISKCON since 1994 and is a disciple of His Holiness Śivarāma Swami.*

## Curriculums

*Common Subjects* (Vaishnava Theology B.A. & Yoga Master B.A.)

- Religious and Methodical Basics
- Itihasas: Ramayana, Mahabharata
- Bhagavad-gita
- Isopanisad
- Nectar of Devotion
- Manu-samhita
- History of India, Hinduism and Vaishnavism
- The Philosophical Basics of Vaishnavism
- Varnasrama-dharma
- Cosmology
- Basics of Communication
- Rhetoric
- Library and Internet Usage Skills
- Methods of Academic Research and Writing
- Basic Sanskrit
- Vaishnava Dogmatics: Nama-tattva, Bhagavat-tattva, Dhama-tattva, Guru-tattva
- Vedic Culture: Ayurveda, Music, Mathematics, Art, Psychology, Cooking
- World Religions Studies, Western Philosophy

*Vaishnava Theology* (B.A. Only)

- History of Modern Vaishnavism
- Vaishnava Literature
- Madhurya-kadambini
- Nectar of Devotion
- Srimad-Bhagavatam 1–3
- Acharyas
- Apasampradayas
- Archana
- Advanced Nama-tattva
- Advanced Sanskrit

*Yoga Master* (B.A. Only)

- Yoga-sutra
- Introduction to Anatomy, Physiology and Hygienics
- Yoga Practices: Asanas and Pranayamas
- Cakra-, Japa-, Mantra- and Bhajana-meditations
- Relaxations
- Psychology

*Vaishnava Theology* (M.A.)

- Srimad-Bhagavatam 4–12
- Brihad-Bhagavatamrita 1
- Narada-bhakti-sutra
- Nectar of Devotion
- Advanced Sanskrit
- Church History
- Methods of Academic Research and Writing

## History of Bhaktivedanta College, Budapest

- September 1998: Establishment of Bhaktivedanta College, the institute of higher education of ISKCON.
- September 2001: State accreditation of the College officially commences.
- August 2004: A law passed by the Hungarian Parliament seals the state accreditation of the College.
- June 2005: The first six diplomas in Vaishnava Theology are awarded at the College.
- September 2008: The College joins the Common European Space in Higher Education by applying a Bologna Process Curriculum and offers a three-year B.A. in Vaishnava Theology.
- September 2009: Yoga Master B.A. starts. It is the first accredited degree in yoga in Europe.
- September 2009: Vaishnava Theology B.A. starts in Helsinki.
- February 2011: The College moves to a new building near the Budapest ISKCON temple.
- September 2013: The College will start a two-year M.A. in Vaishnava Theology.

*Ūrmilā Devī Dāsī, a BTG associate editor, has a Ph.D. in educational leadership from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.* Dr. Best Learn to Read, *her three-part series to teach reading to children, is available at the Krishna.com Store.*

# MATERIAL or SPIRITUAL

## The Choice Is Ours

*People tend to ignore the logical consequences of belief in materialism.*

By Hari Parāyaṇa Dāsa

THE *Rāmāyaṇa* recounts how Lord Rāma was banished to the forest on the desires of his stepmother Kaikeyī. Lord Rāma's younger brother Bharata was away at the time of the banishment. On returning to Ayodhya, Bharata was devastated to find his beloved brother in exile and a vacant throne waiting for him. Instead of occupying the throne and enjoying kingly pleasures, Bharata immediately left Ayodhya in search of Lord Rāma. On finally meeting Him, Bharata begged Lord Rāma to return. When Lord Rāma refused, Bharata carried Lord Rāma's sandals back to Ayodhya on his head, put them on the throne, and ruled the kingdom as Lord Rāma's servant. What a wonderful illustration of a truth we can all attest to: Relationships with our loved ones are more valuable than any materialistic pleasure.

Why do relationships satisfy us in ways the best material pleasures cannot? In the scientific worldview one answer is that relationships are an evolutionary feature of living organisms. Birds of a feather flock together to preserve, protect, and propagate their kind. Therefore the happiness derived from relationships is basically a set of chemical signals in the brain that are present because we are molecularly programmed to act in a certain way. Conversely, the Vedic tradition teaches us that the experience of happiness is a nonmaterial process of the soul; the body is only a machine and therefore incapable of feeling emotions. We derive happiness in relationships because as souls we are intrinsically "programmed" to love others. That is our essential quality. While in the evolutionary view love is a symptom of a selfish desire to survive and propagate one's kind, the Vedic tradition explains that a key symptom of love is the desire to unselfishly serve others.

The scientific and spiritual views of an emotion (love) that is a defining aspect of human experience are diametrically opposed to each other. In one view, love is a material emotion originating in the molecules in the brain; in the other, love is the nonmaterial essence of a nonmaterial entity, the soul. Which version is correct? It is not possible

Neither DNA nor any other material cause has yet to account for our conscious experience. As we wait for science to come up with an answer, death waits for us, and meanwhile, the *Bhagavad-gītā* beckons with a verifiable explanation.

DNA molecules: © iStockphoto.com | Sergey Nivens; Praying man: © iStockphoto.com | RonTech2000; Collage: Yamarāja Dāsa.

to settle this question with the scientific (empiric) method. This is because the scientific method requires empirical measurement of the soul, which is described as invisible and inconceivable (*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.25). It is possible to directly realize the soul (*Gītā* 9.2) if one has faith in the process of *bhakti-yoga,* or devotional service (*Gītā* 9.3). This realization necessarily requires practice (*sādhana*) and faith (*śraddhā*), and only the sincere practitioner (*sādhaka*) can gradually perceive the truth. That perception is a necessarily subjective experience. Conversely, we pride ourselves on the scientific advances achieved in understanding the molecular composition of life, but we have no satisfactory explanation for why, as machines, we are conscious—and able to choose to disbelieve that we are machines. The trouble is that waiting for an empirical explanation for our conscious experience is a luxury we can't afford. Our time in this body is quickly eroding. And there are reasons to think that such an explanation may never come.[1]

**The *Gītā* has clear answers for the daunting questions that have vexed scientists and philosophers for a long time.**

## Molecules or Souls

In dealing with the most important questions of our everyday life, then, unless we are enlightened spiritualists we are faced with a conscious choice: to choose the view that we are only machines made of atoms/molecules, or to choose the view that we are something more, that we are spiritual (nonmaterial).

Choosing to accept that we are only material has perceived advantages. In this view we are not accountable to any transcendent law or lawgiver for our actions, so maximizing our pursuit of material happiness can become the primary goal of our lives. But how many people who accept that they are only atoms and molecules actually live that principle? Can they remind themselves continuously that their relationships are meaningless, that their cherished memories are just signals in the brain, and that their life has no purpose? It would be impossible to function in such a way. The materialist could argue that living with such contradictions is an evolutionary feature: Evolution has naturally endowed human beings with the ability to ignore higher questions of existence and focus on survival and proliferation. But for a thoughtful person whose time is not completely consumed with materialistic affairs, such a contradiction must necessarily cause discomfort, and raise questions again and again. Am I really only matter? Are my relationships really meaningless? Do I really not exist? Any coherent framework for interpreting our everyday experience and for conducting ourselves in the world necessarily requires answers to these questions, but the current scientific view simply does not have any useful answers.

Such questions occupy peripheral realms of scientific research, such as the highly speculative research on consciousness,[2] as well as the research on reincarnation and near-death experiences conducted at the University of Virginia.[3] But they occupy center stage in the Vedic body of knowledge, which deserves our attention because it contains logical, nonsectarian, useful answers.

## The Gītā's Three Postulates

As an example, consider the answers to the above questions in the *Bhagavad-gītā.* The *Gītā* could be viewed as a logical theory (much like a scientific theory) with three postulates. First, the *Gītā* explains that each of us is an eternal living entity different from our body. *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.13, for example, captures the distinction with words such as *deha* (body) and *dehī* (the owner of the body), and 13.3 refers to *kṣetra* (the field of the body) and *kṣetrajña* (the knower or proprietor of the field). Second, we are discrete parts of the supreme person, Kṛṣṇa (15.7). And third, we are each very dear to Kṛṣṇa in our unique relationship with Him, just as Arjuna is very dear to Him as a friend (18.65). The entire philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gītā* can be thought to logically flow from these three postulates.

Importantly, the *Bhagavad-gītā* has clear answers for the daunting questions above that have vexed scientists and philosophers for a long time. For example, because we are not material, we do not derive much joy from material objects in this world (5.22). The prospect of death, old age, and disease (13.9) is terrifying because we are eternal and these are foreign to our real identity. We have the propensity to act independently and to enjoy (13.22) because Kṛṣṇa is the supremely independent and supremely joyful person (13.23) who enjoys with His devotees. We have a natural desire to love others and to derive happiness from relationships because others are also parts of the original person, Kṛṣṇa (6.29). We search for our lost love in this world, but the fleeting material bodies we inhabit force us to face the prospect of broken relationships through the influence of death (1.31) or, what may be worse, the influence of time.

How are the answers in the *Bhagavad-gītā* useful to us in our everyday life? When we start performing the experiment of *bhakti-yoga,* we can discover the power of the process. We become liberated quickly from the tormenting tyranny of our baser senses and become peaceful. The living philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gītā* gradually helps us perceive the truth about the fleeting nature of the material world and proves to us how badly we fit into it. If we perform the experiment under the guidance of devotees who, by studying the philosophy and practicing it, have explored the depths of the ocean of *bhakti-yoga,* we avoid common mistakes that could cause the experiment to fail. And if we persevere with the experiment, then we can realize Kṛṣṇa. What can possibly be a better goal for our temporary existence in this world than this?

Sadly the word *spiritual* raises the hackles of many educated people today, and especially of scientists (although this was not so in the past—Isaac Newton, for example, comes to mind). Science is only concerned with reality, goes the refrain. But reality need not be confined to what we can sense, nor does it have to be a prisoner to our capacity for logical reasoning. In any case, if our very existence is in doubt, then what is the meaning of the word *reality*?

Why are we so dismissive of basic questions about our own selves? Can the perfectly logical answers offered to us in the Vedic literature be potentially correct? Why not explore the possibility? If not, what harm can our exploration do to us if the alternative is that we don't exist at all? It is better than living an anxious life wasted in self-degrading material pursuits.

*Hari Parāyaṇa Dāsa is a disciple of His Holiness Rādhā Govinda Swami. He lives in Gainesville, Florida, with his wife, Deva Saritā Devī Dāsī, and their two children.*

NOTES:

1. Thompson R. L, *Mechanistic and Non-mechanistic Science*, Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1989
2. Crick F., and Koch C., "A framework for consciousness," *Nat Neurosci*. 2003 Feb 6(2):119–26
3. http://www.medicine.virginia.edu/clinical/departments/psychiatry/sections/cspp/dops/home-page

BACK TO GODHEAD
BTG BACK ISSUES 2006
BTG BACK ISSUES 2007
BTG BACK ISSUES 2008

# BTG WAREHOUSE CLEARANCE SALE!

## HELP ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF *BACK TO GODHEAD*

On the order of his guru to teach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the English-speaking world, Śrīla Prabhupāda started *Back to Godhead* magazine in 1944. Nearly seventy years later, *Back to Godhead* is still a vital tool to introduce people to Lord Kṛṣṇa's valuable teachings and to nurture the spiritual life of people already familiar with those teachings. Unsold copies of BTG accumulate over time, and we now have around 9,000 magazines, going back about five years. We feel it's a shame for those magazines to lie in our warehouse rather than in the hands of people who can benefit from everything Kṛṣṇa consciousness has to offer. To encourage you to help us distribute these leftover magazines, we're offering past issues at drastically reduced prices:

**Orders of 10–50: $1.00 each, 51–500: $0.75 each, 500+: $0.60 each. (Shipping costs are extra.)**

To order, contact the Krishna.com Store and let one of our Customer Service Representatives know you're interested in the "BTG Warehouse Clearance Sale." Because our inventory includes more than thirty different issues in various quantities, and because different issues may be mixed together in one carton, we will send you issues of our choosing, although we can try to fill requests for specific issues.

## APPROACH A GURU

(*continued from page 10*)

Arabic and Parsi, the Persian language. During the British period in India, we had to learn English. Similarly, the state language during Sanātana Gosvāmī's time, five hundred years ago, was either Arabic or Parsi in different parts of India. When these languages are mixed, it is called Urdu. So Sanātana Gosvāmī was a learned scholar, and he was also born in a very nice *brāhmaṇa* family. He was a Sārasvata *brāhmaṇa.* But although born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, well educated, and a minister, he presents himself in this way: "I was born in a low family, and my associates are all low-class men. I myself am fallen and am the lowest of men. Indeed, I have passed my whole life fallen in the well of sinful materialism." He has understood that the bodily conceptions that "I am a rich man," "I am a very learned man," "I am a *brāhmaṇa,*" or "I am American" are useless understandings.

Why are people in the bodily concept of life? Because their association is bad. At the present moment we do not get any education or good association to understand our real identity. That is the difficulty. Therefore Sanātana Gosvāmī takes the position of an ordinary man and says that he is the lowest of mankind and fallen. If one does not understand his real interest, he is called fallen.

What should be our real interest in life? By the evolutionary process, after going through eight million forms of life, we have got this human form of life. This life is especially meant for understanding our spiritual identity and the Absolute Truth. That is the only business. We have got more intelligence than the cats and dogs; they cannot inquire about their spiritual identity. And if we stay in darkness without understanding our spiritual identity, then we are no better than the dogs and cats. Therefore Sanātana Gosvāmī says, "I have no information about the soul."

Of course, in your country the dog is a pet. Now we in India are also learning how to keep a dog and become aristocratic. [*Laughter*] Now there is a big, big dog show in New Delhi. Formerly in India, although a dog was not neglected and if there was a dog in the neighborhood people would give him food, a dog was not allowed to enter the house. Dogs were trained. They'd come to a door and sit down and move their tail: "Give me some food." And people would give. But he was not allowed to enter. The dog and the *caṇḍālas,* or dog eaters, are not allowed.

There is caste distinction according to the spiritual advancement. The *brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas,* and *śūdras* are higher class or lower class according to their spiritual understanding. One who is elevated in spiritual understanding is a *brāhmaṇa.* Of course, in this age *brāhmaṇa* means *vipratve sūtram eva hi.* That is predicted in the *śāstra:* For one cent, a person buys a sacred thread worn by *brāhmaṇas*, puts it on, and becomes a *brāhmaṇa.* But that is not the process. A real *brāhmaṇa* is a *brāhmaṇa* by qualification, as described in the *Gītā* (18.42):

*śamo damas tapaḥ śaucaṁ*
*kṣāntir ārjavam eva ca*
*jñānaṁ vijñānam āstikyaṁ*
*brahma-karma svabhāva-jam*

"Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom, and religiousness—these are the natural qualities by which the *brāhmaṇas* work." These things are being lost. Therefore in the Kali-yuga practically everyone is a *śūdra.* People at the present moment are very, very low grade. They are described in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.15) as *narādhamāḥ,* the lowest of the mankind; as *duṣkṛtina,* very, very sinful; and as *mūḍhāḥ,* rascals. They do not surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

To surrender to Kṛṣṇa requires some qualification, and Sanātana Gosvāmī wanted that qualification. Therefore he has approached Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We can follow in his footsteps. He is an exalted *ācārya,* but following in his footsteps is essential. Don't be assured that you are a very highly elevated person. Without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, everyone—this is a challenge—everyone is low born. Everyone is badly associated, fallen, and the lowest of the mankind because he's missing the chance to understand Kṛṣṇa in the human form life and does not know what he's going to be in next life.

It is a very risky civilization—without any understanding of Kṛṣṇa. Be careful. Those who have taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, execute the Kṛṣṇa consciousness business very cautiously so that you may not fall down. There is risk of fall down, but if we stick to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet—*mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etāṁ taranti te* (Bg. 7.14)—then there is no fear.

Thank you very much. ❀

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# BENEFITS OF HEARING DHRUVA'S STORY

*After narrating the history of Dhruva Mahārāja, Maitreya Muni tells Vidura what can be gained by hearing or repeating it.*

## CANTO 4: CHAPTER 12

**46** श्रुत्वैतच्छ्रद्धयाभीक्ष्णमच्युतप्रियचेष्टितम्
भवेद्भक्तिर्भगवति यया स्यात्क्लेशसंक्षयः

*śrutvaitac chraddhayābhīkṣṇam*
*acyuta-priya-ceṣṭitam*
*bhaved bhaktir bhagavati*
*yayā syāt kleśa-saṅkṣayaḥ*

*śrutvā*—by hearing; *etat*—this; *śraddhayā*—with faith; *abhīkṣṇam*—repeatedly; *acyuta*—to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *priya*—dear; *ceṣṭitam*—activities; *bhavet*—develops; *bhaktiḥ*—devotion; *bhagavati*—unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *yayā*—by which; *syāt*—must be; *kleśa*—of miseries; *saṅkṣayaḥ*—complete diminution.

**Anyone who hears the narration of Dhruva Mahārāja, and who repeatedly tries with faith and devotion to understand his pure character, attains the pure devotional platform and executes pure devotional service. By such activities one can diminish the threefold miserable conditions of material life.**

PURPORT: Here the word *acyuta-priya* is very significant. Dhruva Mahārāja's character and reputation are great because he is very dear to Acyuta, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Lord are pleasing to hear, hearing about His devotees, who are very dear to the Supreme Person, is also pleasing and potent. ① If one simply reads over and over again about Dhruva Mahārāja by hearing and reading this chapter, one can attain the highest perfection of life in any way he desires; most importantly, he gets the chance to become a great devotee. To become a great devotee means to finish all miserable conditions of materialistic life.

**47** महत्त्वमिच्छतां तीर्थं श्रोतुः शीलादयो गुणाः
यत्र तेजस्तदिच्छूनां मानो यत्र मनस्विनाम्

*mahattvam icchatāṁ tīrthaṁ*
*śrotuḥ śīlādayo guṇāḥ*
*yatra tejas tad icchūnāṁ*
*māno yatra manasvinām*

**(1) What is the benefit of reading this chapter of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*?**

*mahattvam*—greatness; *icchatām*—for those desiring; *tīrtham*—the process; *śrotuḥ*—of the hearer; *śīla-ādayaḥ*—high character, etc.; *guṇāḥ*—qualities; *yatra*—in which; *tejaḥ*—prowess; *tat*—that; *icchūnām*—for those who desire; *mānaḥ*—adoration; *yatra*—in which; *manasvinām*—for thoughtful men.

**Anyone who hears this narration of Dhruva Mahārāja acquires exalted qualities like him. For anyone who desires greatness, prowess, or influence, here is the process by which to acquire them, and for thoughtful men who want adoration, here is the proper means.**

PURPORT: In the material world everyone is after profit, respectability, and reputation, everyone wants the supreme exalted position, and everyone wants to hear about the great qualities of exalted persons. All ambitions which are desirable for great persons can be fulfilled simply by reading and understanding the narration of Dhruva Mahārāja's activities.

**48** प्रयतः कीर्तयेत्प्रातः समवाये द्विजन्मनाम्
सायं च पुण्यश्लोकस्य ध्रुवस्य चरितं महत्

*prayataḥ kīrtayet prātaḥ*
*samavāye dvi-janmanām*
*sāyaṁ ca puṇya-ślokasya*
*dhruvasya caritaṁ mahat*

*prayataḥ*—with great care; *kīrtayet*—one should chant; *prātaḥ*—in the morning; *samavāye*—in the association; *dvi-janmanām*—of the twice-born; *sāyam*—in the evening; *ca*—also; *puṇya-ślokasya*—of sacred renown; *dhruvasya*—of Dhruva; *caritam*—character; *mahat*—great.

**The great sage Maitreya recommended: One should chant of the character and activities of Dhruva Mahārāja both in the morning and in the evening, with great attention and care, in a society of brāhmaṇas or other twice-born persons.**

PURPORT: It is said that only in the association of devotees can one understand the importance of the character and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or His devotees. In this verse it is especially recommended that Dhruva Mahārāja's character be discussed in a society of the twice-born, which refers to the qualified *brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas,* and *vaiśyas.* One should especially seek the society of *brāhmaṇas* who are elevated to the position of Vaiṣṇavas. Thus discussion of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* which describes the character and pastimes of devotees and the Lord, is very quickly effective. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has been organized for this purpose. In every center of this Society—not only in the morning, evening, or noon, but practically twenty-four hours a day—there is continuous devotional service going on. Anyone who comes in contact with the Society automatically becomes a devotee. We have actual experience that many *karmīs* and others come to the Society and find a very pleasing and peaceful atmosphere in the temples of ISKCON. In this verse the word *dvi janmanām* means "of the twice-born." Anyone can join the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and be initiated to become twice-born. As recommended by Sanātana Gosvāmī, by the process of initiation and authorized training, any man can become twice-born. ② The first birth is made possible by the parents, and the second birth is made possible by the spiritual father and Vedic knowledge. Unless one is twice-born one cannot understand the transcendental characteristics of the Lord and His devotees. Study of the *Vedas* is therefore forbidden for *śūdras.* Simply by academic qualifications a *śūdra* cannot understand the transcendental science. At the present moment, throughout the entire world the educational system is geared to produce *śūdras.* A big technologist is no more than a big *śūdra. Kalau śūdra-sambhavaḥ:* in the age of Kali, everyone is a *śūdra.* Because the whole population of the world consists only of *śūdras,* there is a decline of spiritual knowledge, and people are unhappy. ③ The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has been started especially to create qualified *brāhmaṇas* to broadcast spiritual knowledge all over the world, for thus people may become very happy.

**(2) How does one become "twice-born"?**
**(3) To broadcast spiritual knowledge, which type of persons is the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement trying to create?**

**49** पौर्णमास्यां सिनीवाल्यां द्वादश्यां श्रवणेऽथवा
दिनक्षये व्यतीपाते सङ्क्रमेऽर्कदिनेऽपि वा
**50** श्रावयेच्छ्रद्दधानानां तीर्थपादपदाश्रयः
नेच्छंस्तत्रात्मनात्मानं सन्तुष्ट इति सिध्यति

*paurṇamāsyāṁ sinīvālyāṁ*
*dvādaśyāṁ śravaṇe 'thavā*
*dina-kṣaye vyatīpāte*
*saṅkrame 'rkadine 'pi vā*
*śrāvayec chraddadhānānāṁ*
*tīrtha-pāda-padāśrayaḥ*
*necchaṁs tatrātmanātmānaṁ*
*santuṣṭa iti sidhyati*

*paurṇamāsyām*—on the full moon; *sinīvālyām*—on the dark moon; *dvādaśyām*—on the day after Ekādaśī; *śravaṇe*—during the Śravaṇa star's appearance; *athavā*—or; *dina-kṣaye*—at the end of the *tithi; vyatīpāte*—a particular day of the name; *saṅkrame*—at the end of the month; *arkadine*—on Sunday; *api*—also; *vā*—or; *śrāvayet*—one should recite; *śraddadhānānām*—to a receptive audience; *tīrtha-pāda*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *pada-āśrayaḥ*—taken shelter of the lotus feet; *na icchan*—without desiring remuneration; *tatra*—there; *ātmanā*—by the self; *ātmānam*—the mind; *santuṣṭaḥ*—pacified; *iti*—thus; *sidhyati*—becomes perfect.

**Persons who have completely taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord should recite this narration of Dhruva Mahārāja without taking remuneration. Specifically, recitation is recommended on the full moon or dark moon day, on the day after Ekādaśī, on the appearance of the Śravaṇa star, at the end of a particular tithi, or the occasion of Vyatīpāta, at the end of the month, or on Sunday. Such recitation should of course be performed before a favorable audience. When recitation is performed this way, without professional motive, the reciter and audience become perfect.**

PURPORT: Professional reciters may ask money to extinguish the blazing fire within their bellies, but they cannot make any spiritual improvement or become perfect. ④ It is therefore strictly forbidden to recite *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as a profession to earn a livelihood. ⑤ Only one who is completely surrendered at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, depending fully on Him for personal maintenance or even for maintenance of his family, can attain perfection by recitation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* which is full of narrations of the pastimes of the Lord and His devotees. ⑥ The process can be summarized as follows: the audience must be faithfully receptive to the *Bhāgavata* message, and the reciter should completely depend on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Bhāgavata* recitation must not be a business. If done in the right way, not only does the reciter achieve perfect satisfaction, but the Lord also is very satisfied with the reciter and the audience, and thus both are liberated from material bondage simply by the process of hearing.

**51** ज्ञानमज्ञाततत्त्वाय यो दद्यात्सत्पथेऽमृतम्
कृपालोर्दीननाथस्य देवास्तस्यानुगृह्णते

*jñānam ajñāta-tattvāya*
*yo dadyāt sat-pathe 'mṛtam*
*kṛpālor dīna-nāthasya*
*devās tasyānugṛhṇate*

*jñānam*—knowledge; *ajñāta-tattvāya*—to those who are unaware of the truth; *yaḥ*—one who; *dadyāt*—imparts; *sat-pathe*—on the path of truth; *amṛtam*—immortality; *kṛpāloḥ*—kind; *dīna-nāthasya*—protector of the poor; *devāḥ*—the demigods; *tasya*—to him; *anugṛhṇate*—give blessings.

**The narration of Dhruva Mahārāja is sublime knowledge for the attainment of immortality. Persons unaware of the Absolute Truth can be led to the path of truth. Those who out of transcendental kindness take on the responsibility of becoming master-protectors of the poor living entities automatically gain the interest and blessings of the demigods.**

PURPORT: *Jñānam ajñāta* means knowledge which is unknown almost throughout the entire world. No one knows actually what is the Absolute Truth. Materialists are very proud of their advancement in education, in philosophical speculation, and in scientific knowledge, but no one actually knows what the Absolute Truth is. ⑦ The great sage Maitreya, therefore, recommends that to enlighten people about the Absolute Truth (*tattva*), devotees should preach the teachings of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* throughout the entire world. Śrīla Vyāsadeva especially compiled this great literature of scientific knowledge because people are completely unaware of the Absolute Truth. In the beginning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* First Canto, it is said that Vyāsadeva, the learned sage, compiled this great *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* just to stop the ignorance of the mass of people. Because people do not know the Absolute Truth, this *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was specifically compiled by Vyāsadeva under the instruction of Nārada. Generally, even though people are interested in understanding the truth, they take to speculation and reach at most the conception of impersonal Brahman. But very few men actually know the Personality of Godhead.

Recitation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is specifically meant to enlighten people about the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. ⑧ Although there is no fundamental difference between impersonal Brahman, localized Paramātmā, and the Supreme Person, factual immortality cannot be obtained unless and until one attains the stage of associating with the Supreme Person. Devotional service, which leads to the association of the Supreme Lord, is actual immortality. ⑨ Pure devotees, out of compassion for the fallen souls, are *kṛpālu,* very kind to people in general; they distribute this *Bhāgavata* knowledge all over the world. A kindhearted devotee is called *dīna-nātha,* protector of the poor, ignorant mass of people. Lord Kṛṣṇa is also known as *dīna-nātha* or

**(4) May one earn one's livelihood by reciting the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*?**
**(5) Who is qualified to attain perfection simply by reciting the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*?**
**(6) In summary, what is the process of hearing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*?**
**(7) What process does Maitreya recommend for enlightening people in the Absolute Truth?**
**(8) What stage must one attain to obtain factual immortality?**
**(9) How do devotees show their compassion for the fallen souls?**

*dīna-bandhu,* the master or actual friend of the poor living entities, and His pure devotee also takes the same position of *dīna-nātha.* The *dīna-nāthas,* or devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who preach the path of devotional service, become the favorites of the demigods. Generally people are interested in worshiping the demigods, especially Lord Śiva, in order to obtain material benefits, but a pure devotee, who engages in preaching the principles of devotional service, as prescribed in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* does not need to separately worship the demigods; the demigods are automatically pleased with him and offer all the blessings within their capacity. As by watering the root of a tree the leaves and branches are automatically watered, so, by executing pure devotional service to the Lord, the branches, twigs, and leaves of the Lord, known as demigods, are automatically pleased with the devotee, and they offer all benedictions.

**52** इदं मया तेऽभिहितं कुरूद्वह
ध्रुवस्य विख्यातविशुद्धकर्मणः
हित्वार्भकः क्रीडनकानि मातु-
र्गृहं च विष्णुं शरणं यो जगाम

*idaṁ mayā te 'bhihitaṁ kurūdvaha*
*dhruvasya vikhyāta-viśuddha-karmaṇaḥ*
*hitvārbhakaḥ krīḍanakāni mātur*
*gṛhaṁ ca viṣṇuṁ śaraṇaṁ yo jagāma*

*idam*—this; *mayā*—by me; *te*—unto you; *abhihitam*—described; *kuru-udvaha*—O great one among the Kurus; *dhruvasya*—of Dhruva; *vikhyāta*—very famous; *viśuddha*—very pure; *karmaṇaḥ*—whose activities; *hitvā*—giving up; *arbhakaḥ*—child; *krīḍanakāni*—toys and playthings; *mātuḥ*—of his mother; *gṛham*—home; *ca*—also; *viṣṇum*—to Lord Viṣṇu; *śaraṇam*—shelter; *yaḥ*—one who; *jagāma*—went.

**The transcendental activities of Dhruva Mahārāja are well known all over the world, and they are very pure. In childhood Dhruva Mahārāja rejected all kinds of toys and playthings, left the protection of his mother, and seriously took shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. My dear Vidura, I therefore conclude this narration, for I have described to you all its details.**

PURPORT: It is said by Cāṇakya Paṇḍita that life is certainly short for everyone, but if one acts properly, his reputation will remain for a generation. As the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is everlastingly famous, so the reputation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotee is also everlasting. Therefore in describing Dhruva Mahārāja's activities two specific words have been used—*vikhyāta,* very famous, and *viśuddha,* transcendental. Dhruva Mahārāja's leaving home at a tender age and taking shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the forest is a unique example in this world.

**(10) What is the evidence that the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the devotees are fascinating and transcendental?**

## CANTO 4: CHAPTER 13

सूत उवाच
**1** निशम्य कौषारविणोपवर्णितं
ध्रुवस्य वैकुण्ठपदाधिरोहणम्
प्ररूढभावो भगवत्यधोक्षजे
प्रष्टुं पुनस्तं विदुरः प्रचक्रमे

*sūta uvāca*
*niśamya kauṣāraviṇopavarṇitaṁ*
*dhruvasya vaikuṇṭha-padādhirohaṇam*
*prarūḍha-bhāvo bhagavaty adhokṣaje*
*praṣṭuṁ punas taṁ viduraḥ pracakrame*

*sūtaḥ uvāca*—Sūta Gosvāmī said; *niśamya*—after hearing; *kauṣāraviṇā*—by the sage Maitreya; *upavarṇitam*—described; *dhruvasya*—of Mahārāja Dhruva; *vaikuṇṭha-pada*—to the abode of Viṣṇu; *adhirohaṇam*—ascent; *prarūḍha*—increased; *bhāvaḥ*—devotional emotion; *bhagavati*—unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *adhokṣaje*—who is beyond the reach of direct perception; *praṣṭum*—to inquire; *punaḥ*—again; *tam*—unto Maitreya; *viduraḥ*—Vidura; *pracakrame*—attempted.

**Sūta Gosvāmī, continuing to speak to all the ṛṣis, headed by Śaunaka, said: After hearing Maitreya Ṛṣi describe Dhruva Mahārāja's ascent to Lord Viṣṇu's abode, Vidura became very much enlightened in devotional emotion, and he inquired from Maitreya as follows.**

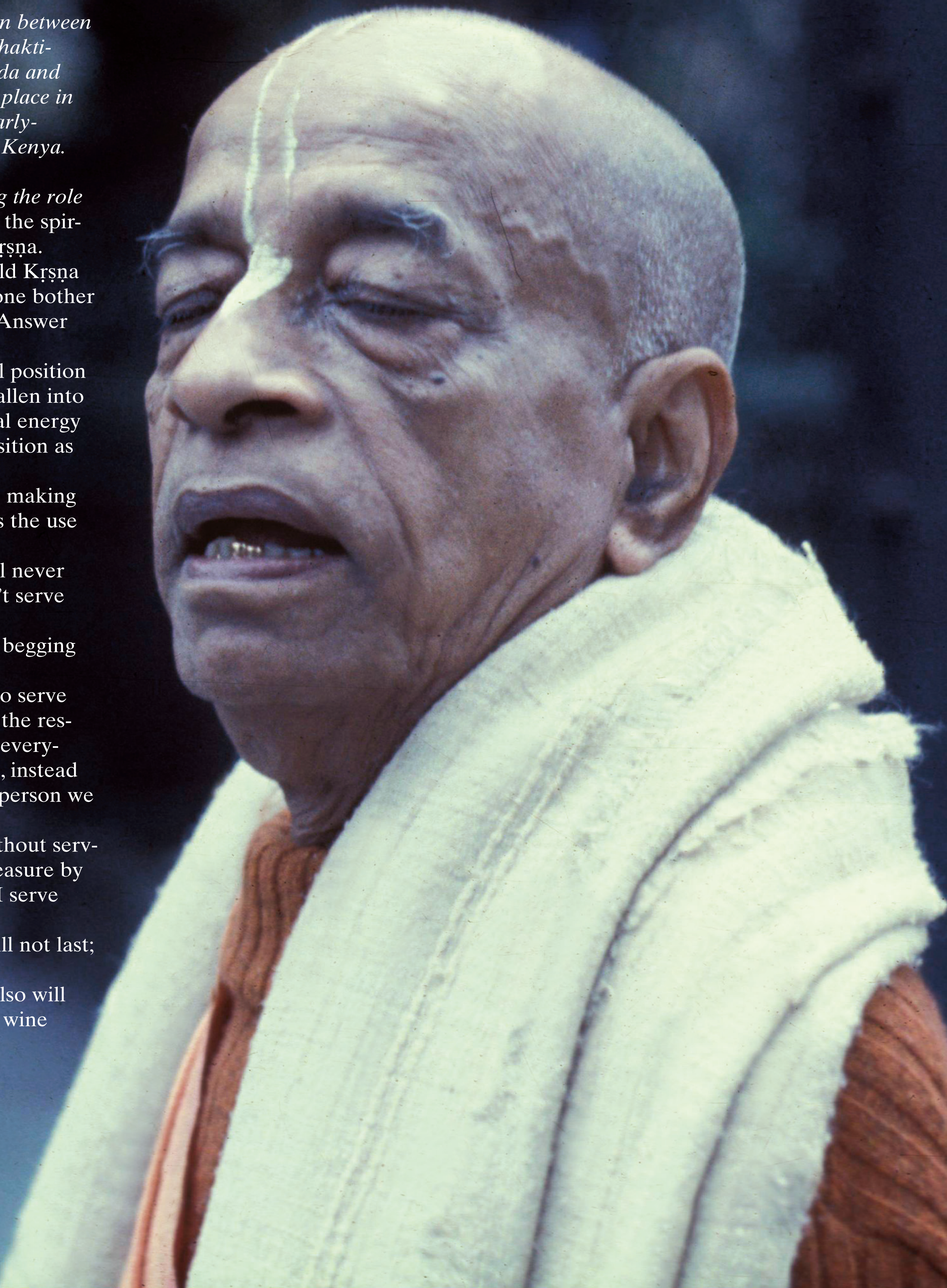
PURPORT: ⑩ As evidenced in the topics between Vidura and Maitreya, the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the devotees are so fascinating that neither the devotee who is describing them nor the devotee who is hearing is at all fatigued by the inquiries and answers. Transcendental subject matter is so nice that no one becomes tired of hearing or speaking. Others, who are not devotees, may think, "How can people devote so much time simply to talks of God?" But devotees are never satisfied or satiated in hearing and speaking about the Supreme Personality of Godhead or about His devotees. The more they hear and talk, the more they become enthusiastic to hear. The chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is simply the repetition of three words, Hare, Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, but still devotees can go on chanting this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra twenty-four hours a day without feeling fatigued.

[*Continued in the next issue.*]

## ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

# "We Must Cooperate with Kṛṣṇa"

*The following conversation between His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place in October 1975 during an early-morning walk in Nairobi, Kenya.*



**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** [*Taking the role of an atheist.*] By pleasing the spiritual master you please Kṛṣṇa. That's nice. But why should Kṛṣṇa be pleased? Why should one bother himself to please Kṛṣṇa? Answer this.

**Disciple:** Because our real position is to serve Kṛṣṇa. We've fallen into the illusion of this material energy because we forgot our position as His servants.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** We are making scientific progress. What is the use of bringing God in?

**Disciple:** Because we shall never become perfect if we don't serve God.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is begging the question.

**Disciple:** Everybody has to serve somebody. Since Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of all pleasure and everything emanates from Him, instead of serving some ordinary person we should serve Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But without serving Kṛṣṇa I am getting pleasure by drinking wine. Why shall I serve Him?

**Disciple:** That pleasure will not last; it is only temporary.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** But I also will not last. So I am enjoying wine while I can.

# IN MEMORIAM

## *Ananta-śānti Dāsa*

*Photo from the 1980s*

### LEST WE FORGET

*A letter to the recently departed Ananta-śānti Dāsa, Śrīla Prabhupāda's first disciple in the former Soviet Union.*

*Ananta-śānti Dāsa passed away on June 3 this year, as the result of a stroke. The following is adapted from* Diary of a Traveling Monk*, Volume 13, Chapter 11.*

Dear Ananta-śānti Prabhu,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

It was with great sadness that I learned of your recent departure. I rarely, if ever, express any deep emotion, but upon hearing of your demise I broke down and cried, for you have always been a true hero to me. By the Lord's arrangement, you met our spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupda, on his first visit to the former Soviet Union, in June 1971. Knowing your heart, he initiated you after only a few days and instructed you to spread Lord Caitanya's movement throughout your country. Śrīla Prabhupāda's confidence in you was revealed when he said of you, "Just as you can judge whether rice is properly cooked by picking out one small grain, so you can know an entire nation by observing one of its handpicked youths."

With Śrīla Prabhupāda's blessings you fearlessly proceeded to spread the holy names around the Soviet Union, often at great risk. Your effort was initially single-handed, but you made devotees and soon their preaching was causing great alarm amongst the communist leaders of the time. In a 1981 issue of *Kommunist,* the official journal of the Communist Party, Semyon Tsvigun, the Deputy Chairman of the KGB secret police, wrote that "the three greatest threats to the Soviet way of life are Western culture, rock-and-roll music, and Hare Krishna."

Such warnings did not deter you, however, and you continued preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness with great vigor. After eleven years, your efforts finally attracted the attention of the KGB, who arrested you in 1982.

While awaiting trial, you were confined to the Butyrskaya Investigations Prison. In June 1983, you were tried and found guilty of "infringement of person and rights of citizens under appearance of performing religious ceremonies." As punishment you were committed to the dreaded Smolensk Special Psychiatric Hospital rather than being put into prison. This enabled the

**Disciple:** But such a mentality is third class. Actually, our life is eternal.
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That is your statement—"third class"—but my statement is "It is first class."
**Disciple:** Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10), "To those who are constantly devoted to Me and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me." So, this is our desire.
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** I don't want to go.
**Disciple:** You don't want to go to Kṛṣṇa?
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** No.
**Disciple:** All right, suffer.
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** You are putting upon me some impression—"suffer"—but I am enjoying.
**Disciple:** Your knee is hurting. Is that enjoying?
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** That I am curing. That is also nice. [*Laughter.*]
**Disciple:** It is said in the *Bhāgavatam* that we are just like the limbs of the body and that Kṛṣṇa is like the stomach. All the limbs may be jealous of the stomach and not want to feed the stomach, but if the hands and legs and mouth were to go on strike and not feed the stomach, they would ultimately be destroyed.
**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** This is the right answer. Every limb of the body must cooperate with the stomach. If the finger thinks, "I shall remain independent and be happy," that is not possible. The stomach must be supplied food, and then all the other parts of the body will be happy.

Similarly, Kṛṣṇa is the central enjoyer (*bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasām*). He is the center of everyone's activities, just as this African state is the center of people's activities here. If you do not satisfy the state—or the president—then you cannot remain happy. Independently you cannot be happy. For example, we have come to this park because the state is maintaining it. We have not gone to the jungle. So if we actually want happiness, we must authorities to keep you for an indefinite period of time. In the psychiatric hospital, you were continuously administered haloperidol, a neuroleptic drug that caused convulsions in your facial muscles and deterioration of your mental condition. In April 1986, you were transferred to the Special Psychiatric Hospital in Oryol, where you received the same severe treatment.

By that time, you and the other imprisoned devotees in the Soviet Union had attracted worldwide attention from human-rights organizations and devotees from within our movement. When numerous parcels and letters began arriving at the psychiatric hospital, the staff responded by strapping you to your bed and administering large doses of the drug sulfazine. This caused you to suffer high fevers, pain, and hallucinations. When your wife visited the hospital and asked the doctors when you would be released, they replied, "One's understanding of life and reality are not so quickly cured."

Years later you were freed, but being acutely affected by the inhumane treatment you received in prison, you drifted away from devotional service and the association of devotees for some time. No one should hold this against you, however, for it was clearly the result of the hideous drugs administered to you during your confinement. In recent years, you reestablished loving relationships with many devotees and took up the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness again.

My dear godbrother Ananta-śānti, the sacrifices you made in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the suffering you underwent in executing that mission, and the determination you displayed to serve the order of our spiritual master are rare even amongst Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

May all Vaiṣṇavas know of your exploits. May they honor the pain you endured and the faith you regained despite all efforts by communist authorities to destroy it. Lest we forget, may we constantly remember your unique contribution to Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement. From your transcendental position please look down upon this humble soul and grant me the same courage that you had to spread the glories of the holy names far and wide despite the greatest opposition.

With the deepest respect and admiration,

Your servant,
Indradyumna Swami

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cooperate with the state.

Similarly, if our ultimate aim is to become happy, then we must cooperate with Kṛṣṇa. This is obligatory. You cannot escape it. If you try, you'll be unhappy.

**Disciple:** We are part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa . . .

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Even a child—he will naturally bring everything to his mouth. He picks up something, but he does not put it anywhere. Immediately he puts it in the mouth. Why doesn't he put it in the ear? He doesn't know what is what, but as soon as he gets something, he puts it in his mouth because his position is eating. He knows—"Taste with the tongue and eat." He hasn't got to be educated.

So, our position is like that. Being part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, we have a natural tendency to serve Him. Serving Kṛṣṇa is not artificial. When you forget Kṛṣṇa, that is artificial. Our normal life is to love Kṛṣṇa, to serve Kṛṣṇa. That is our normal life. Without our serving Kṛṣṇa life is abnormal, a madman's life.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa comes to this world to preach normal life: *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja* (*Gītā* 18.66). "Give up all other so-called duties and simply surrender unto Me." This is normal life. Kṛṣṇa doesn't require our help. He can create many helpers. But for our good Kṛṣṇa comes and says, "If you want a normal, happy life, then surrender unto Me." This is His proposal.

**Disciple:** But Kṛṣṇa is not here now to give us this normal life. What are we to do?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Therefore *Bhagavad-gītā* and all other Vedic literatures are there to remind us of our forgotten position—to love and serve Kṛṣṇa.

*kṛṣṇa bhuli' sei jīva*
*anādi-bahirmukha*
*ataeva māyā tāre deya*
*saṁsāra-duḥkha*

["Forgetting Kṛṣṇa, the living entity has been attracted by the external feature from time immemorial. Therefore the illusory energy (*māyā*) gives him all kinds of misery in his material existence." (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 20.117)]

We cannot ascertain when we have come to this world, but from time immemorial we have forgotten Kṛṣṇa, and life after life we are changing bodies and suffering. So here, in the human form of life, there is the opportunity to revive our original position. But we require the help of knowledge, perfect knowledge. That is available in the Vedic literature.

So, we may read the *Bhagavad-gītā,* but if we don't take advantage of its knowledge and if we go on acting whimsically, then we will suffer. You cannot avoid cooperating with Kṛṣṇa. You must cooperate. There is no question of an alternative. You must cooperate; otherwise you'll never be happy.

Our aim of life should be to end misery (*atyāntika-duḥkha-nivṛttiḥ*). For example, I'm suffering from this knee trouble because I am in this material world, because I have this material body. So, *atyāntika-duḥkha-nivṛttiḥ* means no more material world, no more material body. And no more misery. And for that purpose we have to cooperate with Kṛṣṇa; otherwise it is not possible to end our misery.

## SAVED BY THE BELL:

# MADANA MOHANA

## The Story of the First Kṛṣṇa Deity in ISKCON

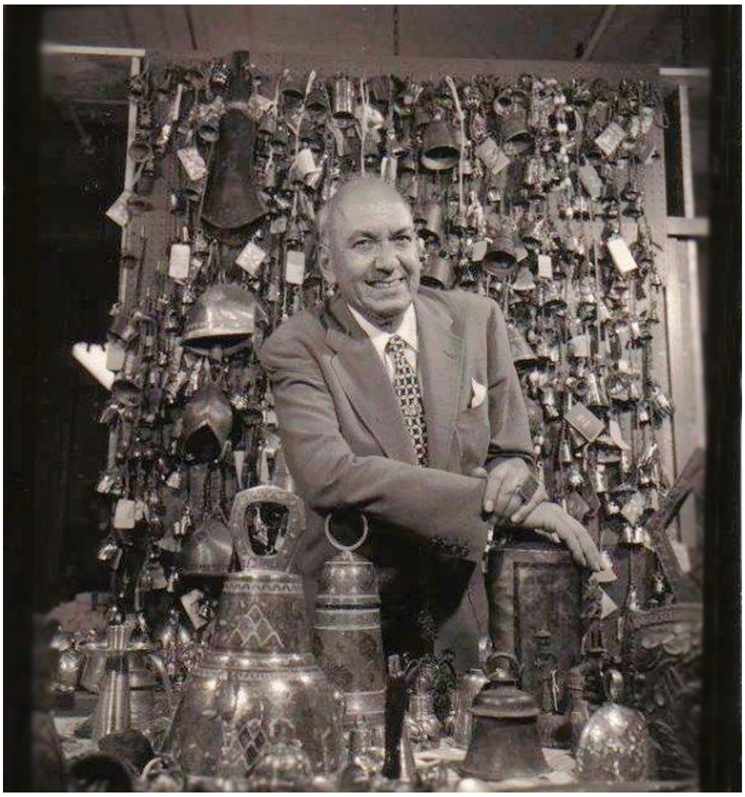
*Two of Śrīla Prabhupāda's early disciples discover Kṛṣṇa while shopping for bells in New York City.*

By Satyarāja Dāsa

WHEN ŚRĪLA Prabhupāda arrived in New York City in September 1965, he felt deep separation from Vrindavan and the major deities there—"My Lords, Govindaji, Gopinath, and Radha Damodar," as he noted in his diary. After seven months of mixed results, he opened his first temple on the Lower East Side. Centers soon opened in San Francisco, Montreal, Los Angeles, and London as his movement took root. In all these temples, deities of Kṛṣṇa would grace the altars, relieving the feelings of separation Prabhupāda had endured upon leaving Vrindavan.

Those familiar with ISKCON history know well the first instances of deity worship in the movement. These heart-warming events occurred soon after Śrīla Prabhupāda founded his institution in 1966. One could cite, for example, the story of his early disciple Mālatī Devī Dāsī, who in the spring of 1967 happened into a shop in San Francisco and found a wooden deity of Lord Jagannātha, the form of Kṛṣṇa worshiped in Puri, Orissa. Without any idea who the divine icon was, she brought Him before Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Upon seeing the Lord's resplendent form, Prabhupāda made His identity clear: "You have brought Jagannātha, the 'Lord of the Universe.' He is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Thank you very much."



Shivan Sarna

*In the bell warehouse of Mr. Sajjan Singh Sarna (above), Brahmānanda Dāsa and Gargamuni Dāsa found a Kṛṣṇa deity (at right, with Rādhā, at ISKCON Potomac), whom Prabhupāda named Madana-Mohana.*

© Lakṣmīvān Dāsa (Lawson Knight)

Other early stories involve more conventional Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa deities, such as the small metal ones now found in New York. They were Śrīla Prabhupāda's personal deities from early on, and installed in April 1968. These divine forms now accompany Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in Brooklyn. One might also mention Śrī Śrī Rādhā–Londonīśvara (London, 1969) and Śrī Śrī Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhīśā (Los Angeles, 1971). Unforgettable, too, are Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara (1971), who toured America by bus and now reside at Gita-nagari farm in Pennsylvania.

But a little known story—and the first of all such stories—introduces us to the beautiful deities currently worshiped at the ISKCON center in Potomac, Maryland, near Washington, D. C.: Śrī Śrī Rādhā–Madana-Mohana.

**Sarna supplied the temple gift shop with brass incense burners, strings of small bells, and cowbells, used in the *kīrtanas*.**

## The Bells of Sarna

Our tale goes back to one of the first Indian benefactors of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in America, Sajjan Singh Sarna (1897–1978), who is more or less unknown to most devotees. He ran a major Indian handicraft/importing business called "Bells of Sarna." Its first warehouse was founded in New York, just as a fledgling ISKCON was gaining steam.

Sarna, originally from Rawalpindi, a city in the Pothohar region of Pakistan, was a Sikh from the Punjab who had come to America in 1920. He was eager to learn about Western culture and was surprised by the country's fascination with India and her spiritual riches. Western interest in the holy land, in fact, had increased with the first major wave of immigrants from India in the first decade of the twentieth century.

In the ten years or so before Sarna's arrival, India had worked its way into America's popular imagination. This became especially apparent when Sarna's newfound American friends offered to buy handicrafts his family had sent to remind him of home. As a result, his life's direction became clear, and a business plan all but called out to him. Establishing himself in New York in the late 1930s as a wholesaler, he specialized in bringing Indian articles to America, mostly textiles, incense, and brass items. These were in particularly high demand, and Sarna's business thrived.

After having a dream about a magical ringing cowbell, he bought a vast variety of bells, and this eventually gave birth to Bells of Sarna. The peculiar trademark of his company: He gave each bell a name and attached a story tag elaborating its purpose and history in India.

In the 1960s the hippies emerged and with them an even greater interest in the East. Young people regularly bought incense, incense holders, statues of Indian divinities, posters, and other paraphernalia to assist in both their meditations and their psychedelic experiences. Sarna eventually started to wholesale to department stores, head shops, and gift stores, and as a consequence, his business grew and grew, with S. S. Sarna, Inc. becoming a major industry.

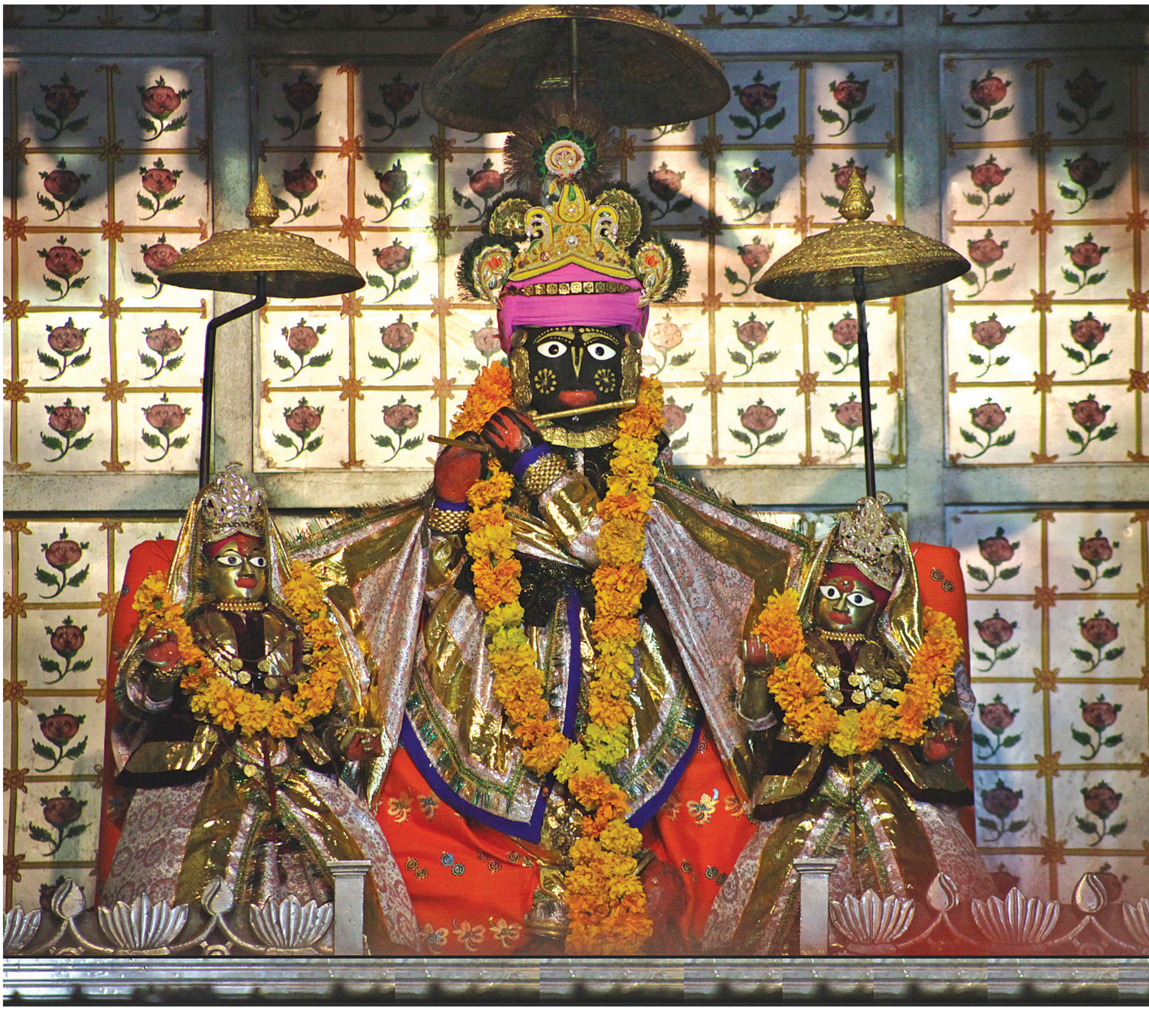
This is where Brahmānanda Dāsa and Gargamuni Dāsa come in. The two American brothers had joined Prabhupāda's mission soon after its inception in 1966. Brahmānanda was the first temple president, and Gargamuni, or "Garga-money" as Prabhupāda affectionately called him, was the treasurer. The two brothers began visiting Sarna's establishment on Lexington Avenue to buy paraphernalia for the temple gift shop of 26 Second Avenue, the first ISKCON temple in the West.

At the Second Avenue gift shop one could find Śrīla Prabhupāda's early Indian editions of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and his smaller *Easy Journey to Other Planets*, along with *Back to Godhead* and his *Introduction to Geetopanishad*; his first booklets, i.e., *Who Is Crazy?* and *Kṛṣṇa, the Reservoir of Pleasure;* special *mahā-mantra* day-glo posters with a distinctive oriental-style font; and posters from India, too, mainly of Kṛṣṇa in various poses and the Universal Form. Śrīla Prabhupāda selected the posters ordered from S.S. Brijbasi & Sons' Delhi catalogue, thus ensuring that the elements in each picture were philosophically accurate and appropriately depicted. Also available in the gift shop were things like incense, Prabhupāda's "Happening" record album, finger-cymbals from a local music store, and wooden beads in a cellophane bag, along with string and instructions for stringing.

Sarna supplied varieties of brass incense burners, strings of small bells, and cowbells, used in the *kīrtanas.* He also supplied cotton bedspreads with Indian designs that were sold as wall hangings. Says Brahmānanda:

> We used to go to his midtown showroom. In a small backroom cluttered with bells, brass stools, tables, and all sorts of knick-knacks was a black marble Kṛṣṇa statue standing on the floor. There were no appended dress, crown, or jewelry—these were carved and painted on the form itself. A simple metal rod was used as a flute. I always noticed this dust-covered statue on our visits, but we never spoke to Mr. Sarna about it. We would only glance at it with curiosity.
>
> What we knew about deity worship was from Śrīla Prabhupāda's First Canto of the *Bhāgavatam*, which he had brought from India, and from his lectures.

> Our experience was only theoretical, with no hands-on deity worship in the movement yet. To ask Mr. Sarna for the statue would have been audacious, and there was no question of purchasing it; funds were low. Yet it was difficult to see Kṛṣṇa neglected in that way, even though we had no idea what a deity was.
>
> Our relationship with Sarna was largely businesslike. He was clean-shaven and with no turban, but he was a Sikh. We rarely discussed spiritual matters, nor did he ever visit the center. But we did have one thing in common: He liked selling his handicrafts because he was proud of Indian culture, and he made this clear to us. In a similar way, we were also sharing with the West something that originated in India. So there was overlap here. And he loved explaining the use of cowbells, elephant bells, and temple bells in India. This was clearly his field. His lifelong dream was to establish a museum of Indian culture in New York, so he was importing all kinds of arts and crafts and storing them.


Bhakti Caitanya Swami

*The original Madana-Mohana deity discovered and worshiped by Sanātana Gosvāmī in Vrindavan now resides in Karoli, Rajasthan. Rādhā is on His left, and Lalitā on His right.*

One afternoon in the winter of 1967, just after Śrīla Prabhupāda had left for San Francisco to nurture his fledgling center there, Mr. Sarna phoned the devotees. He told them he had something for them and they should come to his apartment as soon as possible. When Brahmānanda and Gargamuni arrived (along with newcomer Rūpānuga Dāsa), Sarna told them they could take the Kṛṣṇa *mūrti* with them for their temple. He never said why, nor did they ask, fearing he would change his mind. Brahmānanda assumed that perhaps it was a hard item to sell and was just sitting there collecting dust. But more likely is that Sarna, in his piety, wanted to assist Prabhupāda's mission. As his youngest daughter, Shivan, says:

> My dad was a Sikh but was really a yogi in that he loved God in all forms, including nature, people, and so on. . . . While he loved Kṛṣṇa, he also loved Buddha, Mahavira, Christ, and all the Dear Ones. He was committed to bringing the East to the West and did so through all sorts of wonderful handicrafts made in his homeland of India. He was an entrepreneur and, yes, a spiritual man, too. He had a warehouse in New York that was his hub for his wholesale business, which spanned the nation, and through this business he wanted to share the wealth of India. He was famous for his gift giving. It is no surprise that he gave them the deity of Kṛṣṇa. I am sure he was as thrilled to give it as they were to receive it.

Receiving Sarna's okay to take the deity, Brahmānanda embraced it in his arms as he, his brother, and Rūpānuga made their way back to 26 Second Avenue. They had come by subway, but they intuitively felt that Kṛṣṇa should not have to endure a dirty public-transit ride. So they piled into a taxi with their new Friend.

When they returned to 26 Second Avenue, a special place was made for the deity—an altar, of sorts—and the Lord became a presence in the storefront. At first there was nothing even remotely resembling proper worship, but gradually the devotees started offering incense and ringing the bell—no doubt purchased from Sarna's enterprise. Thus, the first Kṛṣṇa deity in ISKCON was born.

## The Deity Gets His Name

Śrīla Prabhupāda named the deity Madana-Mohana. The significance of this name is that Madana-Mohana was the first deity in Vrindavan worshiped by the followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the sixteenth century. Inspired by this Madana-Mohana, a *brāhmaṇa* had given the deity to Sanātana Gosvāmī. Since Śrī Sanātana was old and poor, he could not worship the deity with the standard required items, but he did worship Him with pure devotion. According to tradition going back to pioneers of Lord Caitanya's Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, devotees seek the blessings of Śrī Sanātana's Madana-Mohana deity in Vrindavan before beginning something, as Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī did before writing the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta.* It is significant that Prabhupāda, now initiating ISKCON, a new institution, chose to name its first deity Madana-Mohana.

Additionally, Madana-Mohana is the primary deity for fledgling devotees. As Prabhupāda writes in his commentary to the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi* 1.19): "In the beginning of our spiritual life we must therefore worship Madana-Mohana so that He may attract us and nullify our attachment for material sense gratification. This relationship with Madana-Mohana is necessary for neophyte devotees." Madana-Mohana is thus a fitting name for the first of ISKCON's deities in the Western world.

*Śrīla Prabhupāda gazes with devotion upon Śrī Śrī Rādhā–Madana-Mohana during his 1976 visit to ISKCON Potomac (above). At left, Rūpānuga Dāsa (on Prabhupāda's left), who performed the installation ceremony of the deities, shows Prabhupāda around the property.*

Interestingly, when Brahmānanda and Gargamuni would come before Prabhupāda together, he would sometimes joke with them, saying, "Rūpa and Sanātana have arrived."

Brahmānanda was the elder of the brothers, and therefore comparable to Sanātana, who was Rūpa's elder brother. It might also be noted that when Śrīla Prabhupāda was a little boy he used to visit Tollygunge, Kolkata, where his maternal uncles lived, and with them he would visit a Madana-Mohana temple across the street from their house. This would have been one of the first Kṛṣṇa deities he had seen in this life. Perhaps it was this that influenced him when naming the new Kṛṣṇa deity for his American disciples.

Dāmodara Dāsa, an early Prabhupāda disciple from the Washington, D.C., area, remembers some history of ISKCON's Madana-Mohana deity, starting in New York. His words are recounted in a 1978 letter to Amara Dāsa:

> Srila Prabhupada looked at the deity that was in the room with him, a beautiful black marble Krishna . . . Madana-Mohana. . . . I can remember vividly dancing in front of Him and having all kinds of "realizations." First He was just standing on the altar, on the lower tier, as I recall. Then when Lord Jagannath was installed, this deity was given a place of honor way up there on top in His own little house, sometimes peeking discreetly from behind a curtain of white gauze. When we moved to 61 Second Avenue [1967], He came to be known as Govinda, and He moved into a glass display case on the left wall of the temple room. Certain amenities, if not pujas, were observed—at least I remember that He was given a spray-bottle shower every day. Or was it every other day? At any rate, His position grew in importance with the move to Brooklyn [1969], where He took up residence in Śrīla Prabhupāda's quarters, and for the first time wore some clothes other than the marble ones He brought with Him.

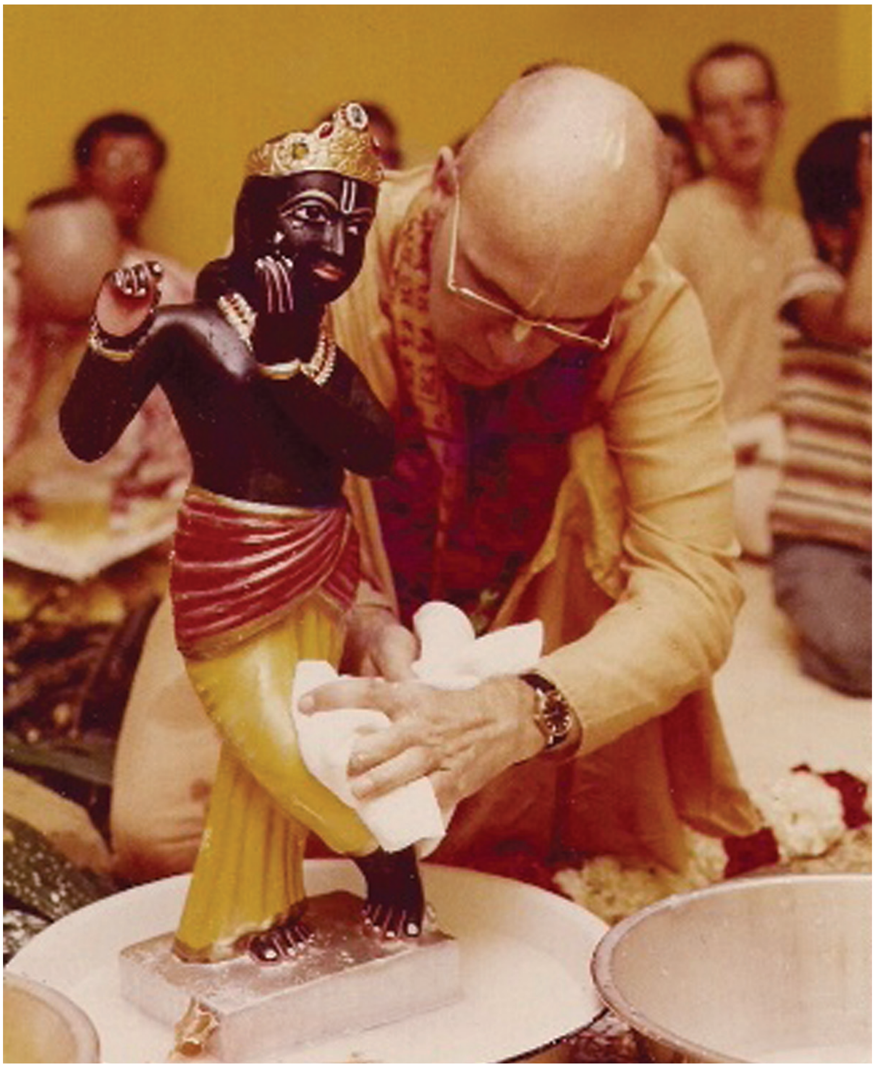
## Madana-Mohana Goes to Washington

In the early 1970s, Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted Madana-Mohana to go to Washington, D.C., to preside over the devotees there. The story, which involves a complex series of events, is retold in Vaiyāsakī Dāsa's *Radha-Damodara Vilasa* (pp. 522–24). But for the purposes of our version, it need merely be noted that at this time Prabhupāda said, "Now you have to find Him a mate." He suggested that Yamunā Devī Dāsī, an early female disciple who happened to be living in Vrindavan at the time, arrange for a deity of Rādhārāṇī to be sent to the West, specifically for Madana-Mohana. And she did. When the Rādhārāṇī deity arrived, Dāmodara Dāsa drove to Kennedy airport with his family to get Her, and he brought Her to D.C., where he was temple president.

It was the summer of 1973, and by the fall, the deities were properly installed and being worshiped by loving devotees. For six years, Madana-Mohana had been gracing ISKCON with His presence, but only now would He receive standard worship. Other deities were already accepting worship and inspiring devotees worldwide. But Madana-Mohana was ISKCON's first deity, even if He had to wait until the early 70s to receive appropriate veneration.

The installation ceremony was a transcendent affair, covered by *The Washington Post*. The article was entitled, "Lord Krishna Lives on Q Street After Installation Ceremony" and was written by staff writer Marjorie Hyer, who captured both the spirituality and the beauty of the event. Some highlights of that article:

> Lord Krishna has come to live on Q Street. He dines six times a day, wears red, blue and green-spangled white brocade robes and stands about two feet tall. . . . To the uninitiated, He may look like just another Hindu statue. But after a four-hour ceremony and virtually nonstop chanting, dancing, sacrificing, and rites that included yogurt baths and being pelted with flowers, the adherents of the Washington Temple of Krishna Consciousness at 2015 Q Street, NW, proclaimed the statue to be Krishna, their God.
>
> Seated on the floor on a pallet made from an India print, the Swami [Rūpānuga Goswami] began the rites that would hook



*During the installation at the Q Street temple in Washington, D.C., Rūpānuga dries Madana-Mohana after His ceremonial bath.*

up the two statues before him to the main post office.

First, he bade the devotees—they pronounce it De-Votees—to recite quietly their mantras or prayers as they sat on the floor of the chairless room. He designated two others to read aloud simultaneously from their sacred scriptures, the Bhagavad Gita.

Then, reading softly from a mimeographed sheet he held in his left hand, he dipped yogurt from a big aluminum dishpan before him and ladled it tenderly over the head of the female deity figure.

As he continued the process, the white yogurt dripped down over the figure's gauzy orange sari and the garland of orange and yellow flowers draped around the figure's shoulders.

When the yogurt pan was empty, he removed the soggy substance from the figure, rinsed it with water, and with the help of Damodar [temple president], carried it behind the orange and silver curtains at the end of the room.

**Prabhupada's visit to Potomac inspired the devotees to greater heights in their service to Rādhā-Madana-Mohana.**

Deliberately and reverentially, he repeated the same process for the male figure. The devotees, most of whom appeared to be under 30, continued with their chanting. Some rocked back and forth, some sat with bowed heads, others with faces upturned.

When the second deity, appropriately anointed and bathed, disappeared behind the curtain, a tall blonde youth hoisted the strap of an Indian style drum around his neck and began to play.

Devotees scrambled to their feet and burst into song. Gradually the drummer and the cymbalists increased the tempo until first one, then another, then the entire group was leaping and gyrating, arms raised, faces contorted in a frenzy of religious ecstasy.

After an hour, the intensity of the singing and dancing increased. Every eye was on the orange and silver curtains. Then the drummer stopped and the curtains parted. There was a gasp from the throng as they glimpsed the brilliantly dressed deities on the altar.

Kim and Chris Murray, a married couple who were both dedicated artists, started frequenting the temple just prior to the installation. Dāmodara Dāsa quickly commissioned them to paint the deities.

"I assisted Kim," says Chris. "She did most of the work. The altar was already there, and we worked behind the curtain, in this little chamber. I remember Kim painting the lotus eyes, the palms, the soles of the feet. We used Prabhupāda's books as our guides, and also Dāmodara and Mṛganetrī [Dāmodara's wife] helped, too."

Mamatā Devī Dāsī was Madana-Mohana's first *pūjārī* (priest), and she feelingly recalls the installation ceremony, along with her very special time there:

> What I remember most vividly from the installation ceremony was Dāmodara Prabhu's *kīrtana.* During the time when Rūpānuga [Gosvāmī] was performing the installation ceremony, we were all sitting and watching, and Dāmodara, with closed eyes, led a slow, melodious *kīrtana,* with deep voice and deep meditation, for a very long time. That *kīrtana* had a profound effect on me. It felt as though we were all getting some realization of Kṛṣṇa being present in His name, and He was now also appearing in His beautiful deity form, Śrī Śrī Rādhā–Madana-Mohana, out of the causeless mercy of our guru, Śrīla Prabhupāda.
>
> I don't remember dressing the deities after the ceremony, but I do remember putting Them to rest that night and how serenely happy I felt, alone with Their Lordships behind the curtain, offering some small service, and how I was completely captivated by Their enchanting beauty. This is the mercy of the *arcā-vigraha* form of the Lord. I feel so fortunate to have been given that opportunity.

## At Home in Potomac

From that point until 1976 the devotees happily served their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā–Madana-Mohana at the popular townhouse temple on Q Street, near Dupont Circle. That year, they moved to the current address in Potomac, Maryland. It was during 1976, too, that Prabhupāda visited the new temple, inspiring the devotees to even greater heights in their service.

Today, ISKCON of D.C. rests on twelve acres of beautiful forested land, a woodland environment that serves to recreate a Vrindavan mood ideal for meditation on the beautiful forms of Rādhā and Madana-Mohana. In February 1974, Gaura-Nitāi deities were installed, followed by Sītā-Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, and Hanumān in October 1981. Besides the temple building, the complex includes a cultural hall and residential and guest accommodations.

A creek rambles through the property, where the devotees grow flowers and vegetables for the deities and lovingly provide for their cows, so dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Some of the cows wear bells around their necks, a special touch that would definitely make Mr. Sarna smile.

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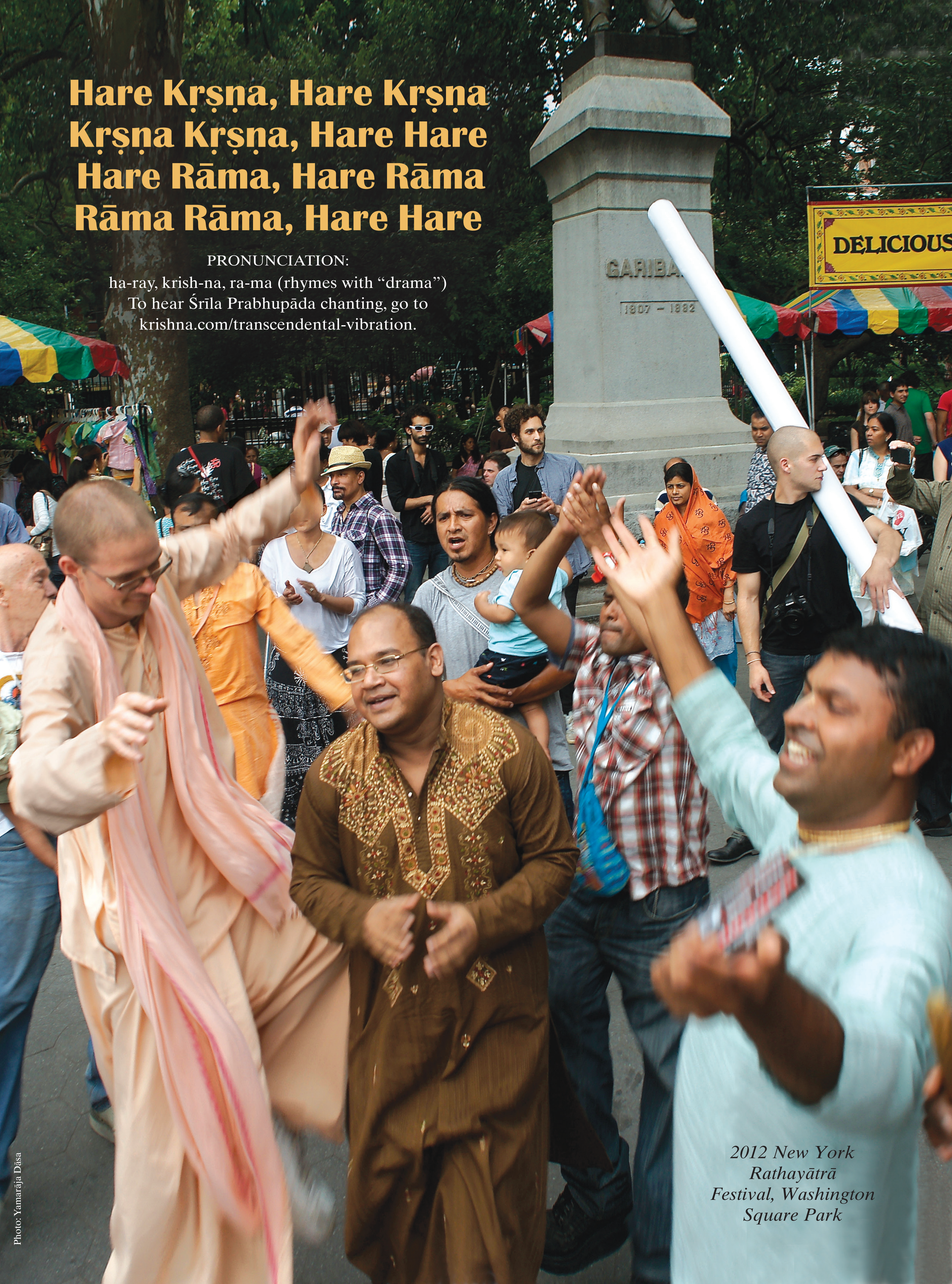
**Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa**
**Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare**
**Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma**
**Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare**

PRONUNCIATION:
ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma (rhymes with "drama")
To hear Śrīla Prabhupāda chanting, go to
krishna.com/transcendental-vibration.



*2012 New York*
*Rathayātrā*
*Festival, Washington*
*Square Park*

Photo: Yamarāja Dāsa

# Is the RĀMĀYA

*Finding inspiration in examples of selfless sacrifice in an ancient epic.*

### By Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa

Photos by Yamarāja Dāsa

THE *Rāmāyaṇa* is made up of stories from ancient times. Is it relevant today?

When I was asked this question in the midst of the rush of this year's Rāma Navamī festival, I answered briefly, stating that though the *Rāmāyaṇa's* stories may be from an ancient setting, they do indeed embody timeless values relevant to us even today. Here I'd like to explain just how they are relevant.

## From "Me" to "We"

One of the primary values the *Rāmāyaṇa* conveys is selfless sacrifice. It is especially relevant in our present times, when people are becoming increasingly enamored by self-seeking lifestyles. Contemporary culture largely glamorizes the "me" paradigm, which impels people to seek their own gratification without caring about its cost for others. When the same

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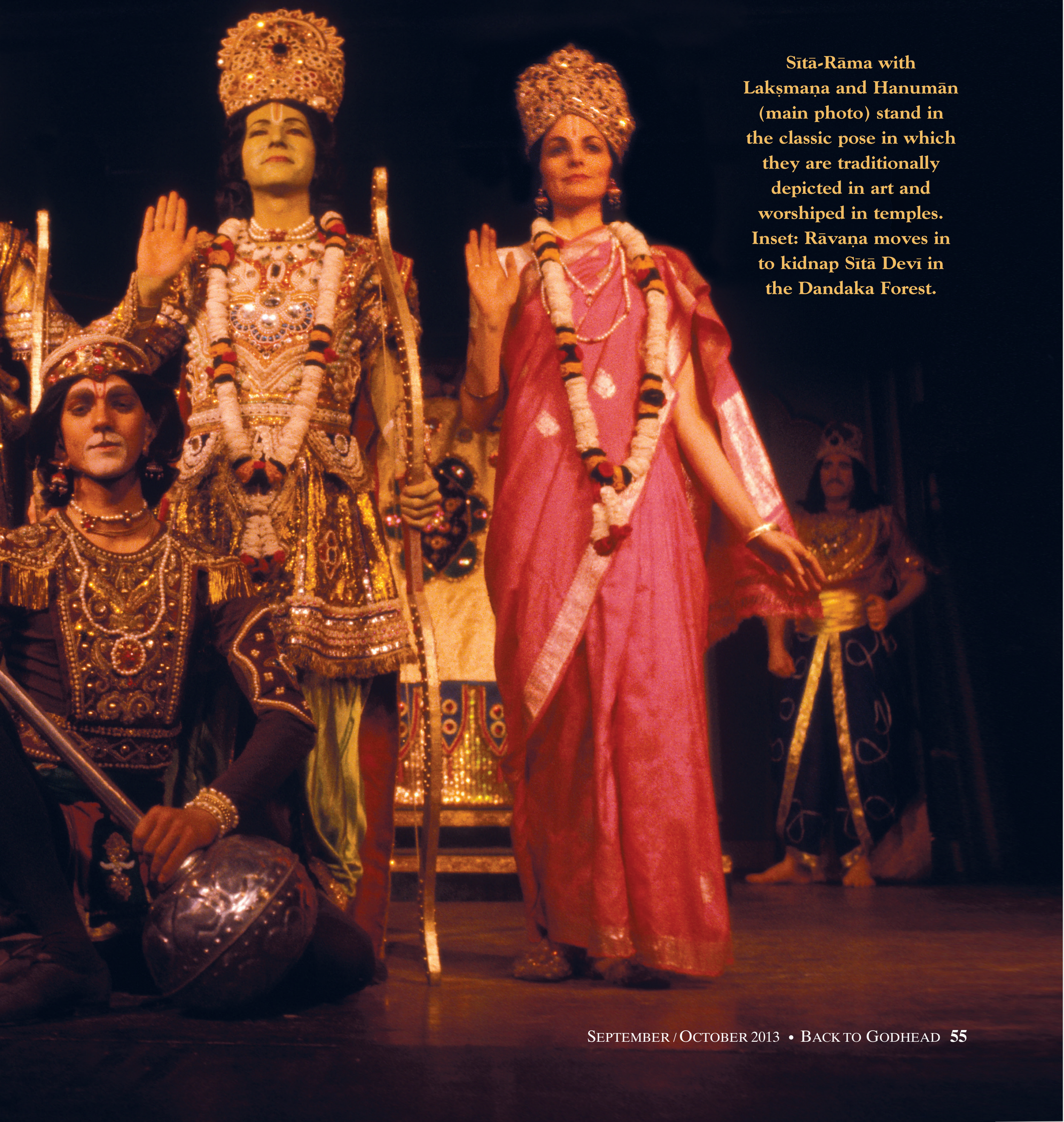
*During his stay at the West 55th St. temple in New York in 1976, Śrīla Prabhupāda saw a three-volume edition of the* Rāmāyaṇa *on a bookshelf. Pointing to it, he said that the devotees should stage a* Rāmāyaṇa *play. They did so from 1978–84, and we've chosen to illustrate this article with scenes from that production. Written and directed by Nanda Kiśora Dāsa, it was performed by Govinda's American Theater Ensemble. (The edition of the* Rāmāyaṇa *Prabhupāda pointed to can be found here: http://archive.org/details/The.Ramayana.of.Valmiki.by.Hari.Prasad.Shastri. Retellings of the* Rāmāyaṇa *are available from the Krishna.com Store.)*

# ṆA Relevant Today?



**Sītā-Rāma with Lakṣmaṇa and Hanumān (main photo) stand in the classic pose in which they are traditionally depicted in art and worshiped in temples. Inset: Rāvaṇa moves in to kidnap Sītā Devī in the Dandaka Forest.**

inconsiderate individualism causes us to neglect or manipulate the people around us—family members, neighbors, colleagues—it boomerangs to wound our heart, afflicting it with emotional ruptures and gnawing loneliness. Thus, the "me" paradigm, despite its instinctive appeal to our ego, is disastrously myopic.

If we desire more satisfying and sustainable relationships, we need to rise from this myopic "me" paradigm to the holistic "we" paradigm. As this paradigm shift can be challenging, it is helpful, even essential, to have inspiring role models and narratives to draw from. For mining such inspiration, the *Rāmāyaṇa* serves as an inexhaustible mother lode; it offers us a panorama of jewellike personalities who embody the spirit of sacrifice in various poignant real-life situations:

**Kaikeyī's temporary spell of selfishness changed her normal kindness, gentleness, and wisdom to uncharacteristic cruelty, harshness, and folly.**

1. To preserve the word of honor of his father, King Daśaratha, Rāma accepted the sentence of exile despite having committed no fault. This example of sacrifice points the way to bridging the ever-expanding parent-child generation gap.

2. By choosing to accompany her husband into exile, Sītā preferred the dangers of the forest to the security of the palace. This is a stirring example of valuing the marital bond, now much devalued due to an increasingly casual approach to sexuality and matrimony.

3. Lakṣmaṇa chose to stand unflinchingly by the side of his elder brother during Rāma's hour of crisis and thereby gained a profound mutually enriching bond. His example of sacrifice can serve as an antidote to the superficial relationships that characterize today's siblings.

4. Bharata resolutely refused the kingdom meant for Rāma. His example of sacrifice can offer a lesson for the many succession or inheritance battles among children that erupt after the death of a wealthy parent—and sometimes even before the death.

## Inspiration, Not Imitation

At this point, someone may object, "If we sacrifice like this in today's self-centered culture, we will be exploited."

That's possible—and that's why the *Rāmāyaṇa* tradition offers the examples of its protagonists not for imitation, but for inspiration, not for duplication of the particulars of their sacrifices, but for appreciation of the principle of sacrifice. As our relationships and interactions occur in real life, we need to consider the various contexts and their implications before we decide how to apply the spirit of sacrifice in our lives.

Lest we feel that the spirit of sacrifice is entirely inapplicable today, we need to look no further than team sports. Whereas a self-seeking player who chases a personal milestone may the cost the team success, a sacrificing player who puts aside individual glory may ensure the team victory. If sacrifice plays a valuable, even critical, role in a relatively frivolous activity like sports, then how much more indispensable will be its role in real-life relationships, which are also like teams, but teams that last much longer and mean much more to us?

## Shades of Darkness

The *Rāmāyaṇa* complements examples of heroic selflessness with examples of tragic selfishness and its unfortunate consequences. Significantly, it demonstrates these ramifications of selfishness through characters with varying shades of darkness:

1. At the pitch-dark end of the spectrum is the epitome of ungodliness, the demon-king Rāvaṇa, who due to his selfish lust commits innumerable atrocities and finally meets his nemesis when his evil eye extends to Sītā, the goddess of fortune.

2. Toward the middle of the spectrum is the monkey-king Vāli, who lets himself be misled by a hasty and nasty misjudgment about his brother Sugrīva's mentality and so selfishly dispossesses Sugrīva of home, wealth, and family and eventually meets his own end in a heart-rending fratricidal showdown.

3. At the brighter end of the spectrum is the queen Kaikeyī. Her temporary spell of selfishness changed her normal kindness, gentleness, and wisdom to uncharacteristic cruelty, harshness, and folly. Her actions agonized her family, brought about the anguished death of her husband, and subjected her to lifelong regret for her insane self-obsession.

Thus, the *Rāmāyaṇa* illustrates its caveats about selfishness not just through outright ungodly characters but also through godly persons who succumb temporarily to selfishness. Their examples inspire all of us to keep up our guard against selfishness and thereby prevent it from sabotaging our relationships.

## Redefining the "We"

If this message of sacrifice as a means to deep fulfilling human relationships were all the *Rāmāyaṇa* offered the world today, then that message in and of itself would be valuable. But the *Rāmāyaṇa's* gifts are much greater and deeper.

The central hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is not a human being, but the Supreme Being. Rāma is an incarnation of the Supreme Lord playing the role of a human being. So the bonds between Rāma's associates and Rāma are examples of the human-divine relationship, far more lasting than the best human-human relationship. All human-human relationships, even if fulfilling, are ultimately distressing due to the inevitability of rupture at death. But the human-divine relationship, when understood as a spiritual relationship between the eternal soul and the eternal Supreme, is eternal—and eternally fulfilling.

The Supreme Lord possesses fully and forever the six primary opulences—beauty, wisdom, strength, wealth, fame, and renunciation—whose fractional and fleeting presence in worldly people attracts our heart to them. Lord Kṛṣṇa indicates that the attractive features worldly people possess ultimately originate from Him. He states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.41), "Know that all beautiful, opulent, and glorious creations spring from but a spark of my splendor." Just as a blazing fire can provide far greater warmth than a tiny spark, the Supreme Lord can provide far greater warmth of love for our hearts than any worldly person.

In fact, the Lord descends as His various avatars to offer us this supreme warmth and ultimate fulfillment. The incredible loving exchanges between the Lord and His devotees comprise the heart of the Lord's pastimes. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.9) indicates that when we understand the true transcendental nature of His pastimes, the desire to have a similar loving relationship gets kindled in our heart. When fully developed, that desire helps us attain the Lord's eternal abode, where we eternally rejoice in loving Him.

Developing our relationship with the Lord, like developing any other relationship, requires commitment and sacrifice. If we miss this essential point, we end up conflating authentic spiritual life with the inanity of ritual religiosity or the feel-good sentimentality of New Age spirituality or any other similar form of shallow or shadow spirituality. The *Rāmāyaṇa* conveys the necessity and the glory of sacrifice in the service of God through its refreshing portraits of extraordinary and ordinary persons who achieved deep devotional relationships with the Lord by activating their individual spirit of sacrifice.

**With his dying breath, courageous, devoted Jaṭāyu informs Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa of Sītā's plight.**

## Present-Day Reenactments Of Rāmāyaṇa Principles

In our times, Śrīla Prabhupāda embodied an unprecedented and unparalleled example of the same spirit of sacrifice. At the advanced age of sixty-nine he ventured singlehandedly across the ocean to fulfill the mission of the Lord: to share spiritual wisdom with the world.

Thus he demonstrated how Hanumān’s example of leaping to Lanka in service of Lord Rāma can be followed today. Just as Hanumān searched zealously to find Sītā in a Lanka densely populated with ungodly elements, Śrīla Prabhupāda searched industriously for spiritually inclined individuals in a world densely populated with ungodly materialistic crowds.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s advanced age and the improbability of the success of his mission evoke the sacrifice of Jatāyu, the aged bird who fought gallantly and became a martyr while trying to stop Rāvaṇa from abducting Sītā. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mission was as imposing and impossible as Jatāyu’s: to stop the rampaging advance of materialism and hedonism, represented by Rāvaṇa, from carrying sincere souls, represented by Sītā, away from the devotional service of the Lord. But, by the miraculous mercy of the Lord, Śrīla Prabhupāda was given the incredible potency by which he transformed mission impossible into mission unstoppable. He tirelessly circled the globe repeatedly, wrote dozens of books, established more than a hundred temples, and inspired millions of people to practice devotional service. He not only stopped devotionally minded people from being carried away by materialistic allurements, but he also redirected materialistic people to become devotees.

Most of us may not be called upon to perform such herculean sacrifices, but by rendering services according to our individual capacities, we can sacrifice and contribute to the Lord’s cause, as did the monkeys to Lord Rāma’s cause. If we strive to serve the Lord sincerely, some of us may discover hitherto unknown abilities within ourselves, as did Hanumān just before his stupendous leap to Lanka. And also like Hanumān, some of us may even become empowered to perform extraordinary feats in the Lord’s service.

Perhaps the most relevant example for us as spiritual seekers is that of Sītā when separated from Lord Rāma and held in captivity in Rāvaṇa’s Lanka. All of us are also separated from the Lord of our hearts and are held captive in material existence, the arena of Rāvaṇa-reminiscent materialism. Sītā demonstrated her unfailing and unflinching devotion to Lord Rāma by rigidly rejecting all the overtures of Rāvaṇa for ungodly indulgence and intensely absorbing herself in remembering the Lord. We too can demonstrate our unflagging devotion to the Lord by firmly rejecting all the overtures for ungodly indulgence in meat-eating, gambling, intoxication, and illicit sex, no matter how great the pressure from our social circle. We can gain strength to withstand such pressure by contemplating the extremity of Sītā’s predicament. She was threatened with death if she refused to indulge—and yet she refused. Surely the pressure on us from our social circle is not that bad. Then why should we give in to it? Following in Sītā’s footsteps, we can further strengthen ourselves by attentively absorbing our mind in remembering the Lord—at least for the time of our daily mantra meditation.

When we understand these timeless devotional principles that underlie the stories of the *Rāmāyaṇa,* we no longer fall prey to the misconception that these stories are just outdated historical tales or mythological ethical parables. We recognize them as authentic and dramatic demonstrations of eternal spiritual principles. These principles have inspired the highest human attainment throughout history. They beckon us to the same supreme adventure and accomplishment. Therein lies the ultimate, unfading relevance of the *Rāmāyaṇa.* No wonder eminent literary historian A. A. MacDonnell noted about this timeless classic: “Probably no other work of world literature has produced so profound an influence in the life and thought of a people as the *Rāmāyaṇa.*”

In summary, the *Rāmāyaṇa’s* perennial relevance lies in its power to inspire us to broaden our consciousness from “me” to “we” and to momentously expand the definition of “we” from the human-human paradigm to the human-divine paradigm.

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After providing for their families and loved ones, subscribers may want to put *Back to Godhead* in their wills, thus helping to assure the long-term future of this work. In the USA, bequests are free of estate tax and can substantially reduce the amount of your assets claimed by the government.* You can give needed support for *Back to Godhead* by simply including the following words in your will: *I give, devise, and bequeath to* Back to Godhead, *18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615* (insert amount being given here) *to be used to support* Back to Godhead *and its related activities, including the Krishna.com website.* A bequest can be a specific dollar amount, a specific piece of property, a percentage of an estate, or all or part of the residue of an estate. You can also name BTG as a contingency beneficiary in the event someone named in your will is no longer living. It is recommended that a lawyer help in drafting or amending a will.

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**Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat —** Opp. B&B Polytechnic, Mota Bazaar, Ananda, 388 120/ Tel. (2692) 230796 or 233012/ iskcon.vvnagar@pamho.net
**Varanasi, UP —** ISKCON, B 27/80 Durgakund Rd., Near Durgakund Police Station, Varanasi 221 010/ Tel. (542) 246422 or 222617
**Vellore, TN —** Chennai Ext. Centre, 10–12, 10th East Cross Road, Gandhi Nagar, 632 006
**Vijayawada, AP —** Venkatapalem Karakatta Rd., Undavalli Village, Tadepalli Mandaal, Vijayawada, Dist. Guntur 522 501/ Tel. (8645) 272513/ mmdasiskconvijayawada@gmail.com
**Visakhapatnam, AP —** Hare Krishna Land, Sagaranagar-45 (City office and mail: Plot No. 52, Pandurangapuram, Beach Rd., Visakhapatnam 530 043)/ Tel. (891)2528376 or 6537625/ samba.jps@pamho.net (Guesthouse: guesthouse.vizag@pamho.net)
◆ **Vrindavan, UP —** Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Dist. Mathura, 281 124/ Tel. & Fax: (565) 2540728/ iskcon.vrindavan@pamho.net; (Guesthouse: Tel. (565) 2540022; ramamani@sancharnet.in)
**Warangal, AP —** Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, 506 007/ Tel. (8712) 426182
**Yamunanagar, Haryana —** ISKCON Hare Krishna Dham, Hare Krishna Marg, Raghunathpuri, Yamunanagar 135001/ Tel. (1732) 321001 or (mobile) 09355330775/ vishu_bakshi05@yahoo.co.in

### RURAL COMMUNITIES

**Ahmedabad District, Gujarat (Hare Krishna Farm) —** Katwada (contact ISKCON Ahmedabad)
**Assam —** Karnamadhu, Dist. Karimganj
**Chamorshi, Maharashtra —** 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadhachiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (218) 623473
**Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm) —** P.O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., Dist. R.R., 501 401/ Tel. (40) 65520070 or 9440057263/ naimisaranya@pamho.net

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**Many temples have their own websites, which you can find at our online directory: http://directory.krishna.com.** Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91). For information on international calling, go to www.howtocallabroad.com. ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining

# CENTERS AROUND THE WORLD

**Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) —** Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (731) 572794
**Mayapur, WB —** (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
**Puri, Odisha —** ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 230494
**Surat, Gujarat —** Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur, P. O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (2622) 63546
**Vrindavan, UP —** Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura

### ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

**Kolkata, WB —** Govinda's, ISKCON House, 22 Gurusaday Rd., 700 019/ Tel. (33) 24866922 or 24866009
**Surat, Gujarat —** Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura 395005/ Tel. (261) 2765891 or 2765516/ surat@pamho.net

## CANADA

**Brampton-Mississauga, Ontario —** Unit 20, 1030 Kamato Dr., L4W 4B6/ Tel. (416) 840-6587 or (905) 826-1290/ iskconbrampton@gmail.com
**Calgary, Alberta —** 313 Fourth St. N.E., T2E 3S3/ Tel. (403) 265-3302/ vamanstones@shaw.ca
**Edmonton, Alberta —** 9353 35th Ave. NW, T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ harekrishna.edmonton@gmail.com
**Montreal, Quebec —** 1626 Pie IX Blvd., H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/ iskconmontreal@gmail.com
◆ **Ottawa, Ontario —** 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ iskconottawa@sympatico.ca
**Regina, Saskatchewan —** 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-0002 or -6461/ jagadishadas@yahoo.com
**Toronto, Ontario —** 243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ toronto@pamho.net
**Vancouver, B.C. —** 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728; Govinda's Bookstore & Cafe: (604) 433-7100 or (888) 433-8722/ akrura@krishna.com

### RURAL COMMUNITY

**Ashcroft, B.C. —** Saranagati Dhama, Venables Valley (mail: P. O. Box 99, V0K 1A0)/ Tel. (250) 457-7438/ iskconsaranagati@hotmail.com

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**Berkeley, California —** 2334 Stuart St., 94705/ Tel. (510) 540-9215/ rajan416@yahoo.com
**Boise, Idaho —** 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ boise_temple@yahoo.com
**Boston, Massachusetts —** 72 Commonwealth Ave., 02116/ Tel. (617) 247-8611/ info@iskconboston.org
**Chicago, Illinois —** 1716 W. Lunt Ave., 60626/ Tel. (773) 973-0900/ chicagoiskcon@yahoo.com
**Columbus, Ohio —** 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ premvilasdas.rns@gmail.com
◆ **Dallas, Texas —** 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ txkrishnas@aol.com; restaurant: vegetariantaste@aol.com
◆ **Denver, Colorado —** 1400 Cherry St., 80220/ Tel. (303) 333-5461/ Fax: (303) 321-9052
**Detroit, Michigan —** 383 Lenox Ave., 48215/ Tel. (313) 824-6000/ gaurangi108@hotmail.com
**Gainesville, Florida —** 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ kalakantha.acbsp@pamho.net
**Hartford, Connecticut —** 1683 Main St., E. Hartford, 06108/ Tel. & fax: (860) 289-7252/ pyari108@gmail.com
◆ **Honolulu, Hawaii —** 51 Coelho Way, 96817/ Tel. (808) 595-4913/ narahari@hawaiiweddings.com
**Houston, Texas —** 1320 W. 34th St., 77018/ Tel. (713) 686-4482/ management@iskconhouston.org
**Kansas City, Missouri —** 5201 Paseo Blvd., 64110/ Tel. (816) 924-5619/ rvc@rvc.edu
**Laguna Beach, California —** 285 Legion St., 92651/ Tel. (949) 494-7029/ info@lagunatemple.com
**Las Vegas, Nevada —** Govinda's Center of Vedic India, 7181 Dean Martin Dr., 89118/ Tel. (702) 434-8332/ info@govindascenter.com
◆ **Los Angeles, California —** 3764 Watseka Ave., 90034/ Tel. (310) 836-2676/ membership@harekrishnala.com
◆ **Miami, Florida —** 3220 Virginia St., 33133 (mail: 3109 Grand Ave., #491, Coconut Grove, FL 33133)/ Tel. (305) 442-7218/ devotionalservice@iskcon-miami.org
**New Orleans, Louisiana —** 2936 Esplanade Ave., 70119/ Tel. (504) 304-0032 (office) or (504) 638-1944 (temple)/ gopal211@aol.com
◆ **New York, New York —** 305 Schermerhorn St., Brooklyn, 11217/ Tel. (718) 855-6714/ ramabhadra@aol.com
◆ **New York, New York —** The Bhakti Center, 25 First Ave., 10003/ Tel. (212) 253-6182
**Orlando, Florida —** 2651 Rouse Rd., 32817/ Tel. (407) 257-3865/ info@iskconorlando.com
**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania —** 41 West Allens Ln., 19119/ Tel. (215) 247-4600/ iskconphilly@aol.com
◆ **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania —** 1408 South St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9303/ savecows@aol.com
**Phoenix, Arizona —** 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ premadhatridd@live.com
**Portland, Oregon** — 2095 NW Aloclek Dr., Suites 1107 & 1109, Hillsboro, 97124/ Tel. (503) 675-5000/ info@iskconportland.com
◆ **St. Louis, Missouri —** 3926 Lindell Blvd., 63108/ Tel. (314) 535-8085 or 534-1708/ iskcon.stl@pamho.net
**Salt Lake City, Utah** — 965 E. 3370 South, 84106/ Tel. (801) 487-4005/ utahkrishnas@gmail.com
**San Antonio, Texas —** 6772 Oxford Trace, 78240/ Tel. (210) 401-6576/ aadasa@gmail.com
◆ **San Diego, California —** 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach, 92109/ Tel. (858) 483-2500 or 272-8263/ krishna.sandiego@gmail.com
**San Jose, California —** Mountain View, California, 1965 Latham St., 94040/ Tel. 408 293 4959/ isvtemple108@gmail.com
**Seattle, Washington —** 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish, 98075/ Tel. (425) 246-8436/ info@vedicculturalcenter.org
◆ **Spanish Fork, Utah —** Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ utahkrishnas@gmail.com
**Tallahassee, Florida —** 1323 Nylic St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 224-3803/ tallahassee.iskcon@gmail.com
**Towaco, New Jersey —** 100 Jacksonville Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 109), 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ madhupati.jas@pamho.net
◆ **Tucson, Arizona —** 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ sandaminidd@cs.com
**Washington, D.C. —** 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ info@iskconofdc.org

### RURAL COMMUNITIES

◆ **Alachua, Florida (New Raman Reti) —** 17306 N.W. 112th Blvd., 32615 (mail: P.O. Box 819, 32616)/ Tel. (386) 462-2017/ alachuatemple@gmail.com
**Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) —** 31492 Anner Rd., 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ talavan@hughes.net
**Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) —** Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo (mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ Tel. (787) 367-3530 or (787) 737-1722/ manonatha@gmail.com
**Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) —** 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ bkgoswami@earthlink.net
◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban) —** R.D. No. 1, Box 319, Hare Krishna Ridge, 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600; Guest House, (304) 845-5905/ mail@newvrindaban.com
**Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) —** 532 Murari Ln., 37359/ Tel. (931) 759-6888/ murari_sevaka@yahoo.com
**Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) —** 534 Gita Nagari Rd., 17082/ Tel. (717) 527-4101/ dhruva.bts@pamho.net
**Sandy Ridge, North Carolina —** Prabhupada Village, 1283 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 593-9888/ madanmohanmohini@yahoo.com

### ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

**Hato Rey, Puerto Rico —** Tamal Krishna's Veggie Garden, 131 Eleanor Roosevelt, 00918/ Tel. (787) 754-6959/ tkveggiegarden@aol.com

## UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

**Belfast, Northern Ireland —** Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Ln., BT17 OHE/ Tel. +44 (28) 9062 0530
**Birmingham, England —** 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (121) 420 4999/ birmingham@iskcon.org.uk
**Cardiff, Wales —** The Soul Centre, 116 Cowbridge Rd., East Canton CF11 9DX/ Tel. +44 (29) 2039 0391/ the.soul.centre@pamho.net
**Coventry, England —** Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (24) 7655 2822 or 5420/ haridas.kds@pamho.net
◆ **Dublin, Ireland —** 83 Middle Abbey St., Dublin 1/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ dublin@krishna.ie; Govinda's: info@govindas.ie
**Leicester, England —** 21 Thoresby St., North Evington, LE5 4GU/ Tel. +44 (116) 276 2587/ pradyumna.jas@pamho.net
**Lesmahagow, Scotland —** Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (1555) 894790/ karunabhavan@aol.com
◆ **London, England (city) —** 10 Soho St., W1D 3DL/ Tel. +44 (20) 7437-3662; residential /pujaris, 7439-3606; shop, 7287-0269; Govinda's Restaurant, 7437-4928/ london@pamho.net
◆ **London, England (country) —** Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Ln., Watford, Herts, WD25 8EZ/ Tel. +44 (1923) 851000/ info@krishnatemple.com; (for accommodations:) bmguesthouse@krishna.com
**London, England (south) —** 42 Enmore Rd., South Norwood, SE25 5NG/ Tel. +44 7988857530/ krishnaprema89@hotmail.com
**London, England (Kings Cross) —** 102 Caledonian Rd., Kings Cross, Islington, N1 9DN/ Tel. +44 (20) 7168 5732/ foodforalluk@aol.com
**Manchester, England —** 20 Mayfield Rd., Whalley Range, M16 8FT/ Tel. +44 (161) 226 4416/ contact@iskconmanchester.com
**Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England —** 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (191) 272 1911
◆ **Swansea, Wales —** 8 Craddock St., SA1 3EN/ Tel. +44 (1792) 468469/ iskcon.swansea@pamho.net; restaurant: govin-das@hotmail.com

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**London, England —** (contact Bhaktivedanta Manor: Krishna conscious programs are held regularly in more than forty other cities in the U.K. For information, contact ISKCON Reader Services, P. O. Box 730, Watford WD25 8EZ, UK; www.iskcon.org.uk)
**Upper Lough Erne, Northern Ireland —** Govindadwipa Dhama, Inisrath Island, Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh, BT92 9GN/ Tel. +44 (28) 6772 1512/ govindadwipa@pamho.net

### ADDITIONAL RESTAURANTS

**Dublin, Ireland —** Govinda's, 4 Aungier St., Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (1) 475 0309/ info@govindas.ie
**Dublin, Ireland —** Govinda's, 18 Merrion Row, Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ praghosa.sdg@pamho.net

## AUSTRALASIA

### AUSTRALIA

**Adelaide —** 25 Le Hunte St. (mail: P.O. Box 114, Kilburn, SA 5084)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (8) 8359-5120/ iskconsa@tpg.com.au
**Brisbane —** 95 Bank Rd., Graceville (mail: P.O. Box 83, Indooroopilly), QLD 4068/ Tel. +61 (7) 3379-5455
**Canberra —** 44 Limestone Ave., Ainslie, ACT 2602 (mail: P.O. Box 1411, Canberra, ACT 2601)/ Tel. & fax: +61 (2) 6262-6208
**Melbourne —** 197 Danks St. (mail: P.O. Box 125), Albert Park, VIC 3206/ Tel. +61 (3) 9699-5122/ melbourne@pamho.net
**Perth —** 155–159 Canning Rd., Kalamunda (mail: P.O. Box 201 Kalamunda 6076)/ Tel. +61 (8) 6293-1519/ perth@pamho.net
**Sydney —** 180 Falcon St., North Sydney, NSW 2060 (mail: P.O. Box 459, Cammeray, NSW 2062)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9959-4558/ admin@iskcon.com.au

# Centers Around the World

**Sydney —** Govinda’s Yoga and Meditation Centre, 112 Darlinghurst Rd., Darlinghurst NSW 2010 (mail: P.O. Box 174, Kings Cross 1340)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9380-5162/ sita@govindas.com.au

### RURAL COMMUNITIES

**Bambra, VIC (New Nandagram) —** 50 Seaches Outlet, off 1265 Winchelsea Deans Marsh Rd., Bambra VIC 3241/ Tel. +61 (3) 5288-7383
**Cessnock, NSW (New Gokula) —** Lewis Lane, off Mount View Rd., Millfield, near Cessnock (mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock, NSW 2325)/ Tel. +61 (2) 4998-1800/ iskconfarm@mac.com
**Murwillumbah, NSW (New Govardhana) —** Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. +61 (2) 6672-6579/ ajita@in.com.au

### RESTAURANTS

**Brisbane —** Govinda’s, 99 Elizabeth St., 1st Floor, QLD 4000/ Tel. +61 (7) 3210-0255
**Brisbane —** Krishna’s Cafe, 1st Floor, 82 Vulture St., West End, QLD 4000/ brisbane@pamho.net
**Burleigh Heads —** Govinda’s, 20 James St., Burleigh Heads, QLD 4220/ Tel. +61 (7) 5607-0782/ ajita@in.com.au
**Maroochydore —** Govinda’s Vegetarian Cafe, 2/7 First Ave., QLD 4558/ Tel. +61 (7) 5451-0299
**Melbourne —** Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-2939
**Melbourne —** Gopal’s, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-1578
**Perth—**Govinda’s Restaurant, 194 William St., Northbridge, W. A. 6003/ Tel. +61 (8) 9227-1684/ perth@pamho.net

## NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI

**Christchurch, NZ —** 83 Bealey Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 25-190)/ Tel. +64 (3) 366-5174/ iskconchch@clear.net.nz
**Hamilton, NZ —** 188 Maui St., RD 8, Te Rapa/ Tel. +64 (7) 850-5108/ rmaster@wave.co.nz
**Labasa, Fiji —** Delailabasa (mail: P.O. Box 133)/ Tel. +679 812912
**Lautoka, Fiji —** 5 Tavewa Ave. (mail: P.O. Box 125)/ Tel. +679 6664112/ regprakash@excite.com
**Nausori, Fiji —** Hare Krishna Cultural Centre, 2nd Floor, Shop & Save Building, 11 Gulam Nadi St., Nausori Town (mail: P.O. Box 2183, Govt. Bldgs., Suva)/ Tel. +679 9969748 or 3475097/ vdas@frca.org.fj
**Rakiraki, Fiji —** Rewasa (mail: P.O. Box 204)/ Tel. +679 694243
**Sigatoka, Fiji —** Sri Sri Radha Damodar Temple, Off Mission St., Sigatoka Town/ Tel. +679 9373703 or 6520866/ drgsmarna@connect.com.fj
**Suva, Fiji —** 166 Brewster Street (mail: P.O. Box 4229, Samabula)/ Tel. +679 3318441/ iskconsuva@connect.com.fj
**Wellington, NZ —** 105 Newlands Rd., Newlands/ Tel. +64 (4) 478-4108/ info@iskconwellington.org.nz
**Wellington, NZ —** Gaura Yoga Centre, 1st Floor, 175 Vivian Street (mail: P.O. Box 6271, Marion Square)/ Tel. +64 (4) 801-5500/ yoga@gaurayoga.co.nz

### RURAL COMMUNITY

**Auckland, NZ (New Varshan) —** Hwy. 28, Riverhead, next to Huapai Golf Course (mail: R.D. 2, Kumeu)/ Tel. +64 (9) 412-8075

### RESTAURANT

**Wellington, NZ —** Higher Taste Hare Krishna Restaurant, Old Bank Arcade, Ground Floor, Corner Customhouse, Quay & Hunter St., Wellington/ Tel. +64 (4) 472-2233

## EUROPE (partial list)

**Amsterdam —** Van Hilligaertstraat 17, 1072 JX/ Tel. +31 (20) 675-1404/ contact@amsterdhama.nl
**Barcelona —** Plaza Reial 12, Entlo 2, 08002/ Tel. +34 93 302-5194/ templobcn@hotmail.com
**Bergamo, Italy —** Villaggio Hare Krishna (da Medolago strada per Terno d’Isola), 24040 Chignolo d’Isola (BG)/ Tel. +39 (035) 4940706/ villagio.hare.krsna@hare.krsna.it
**Budapest —** III. Lehel Street 15–17 (Csillaghedy), 1039 Budapest/ Tel. +36 (1) 391-0435/ nai@pamho.net
**Copenhagen —** Skjulhøj Alle 44, 2720 Vanløse, Copenhagen/ Tel. +45 4828 6446/ iskcon.denmark@pamho.net
**Grödinge, Sweden —** Radha-Krishna Temple, Korsnäs Gård, 14792 Grödinge/ Tel. +46 (8) 53029800/ bmd@pamho.net
**Helsinki —** Ruoholahdenkatu 24 D (III krs) 00180/ Tel. +358 (9) 694-9879 or -9837/ Email: harekrishna@harekrishna.fi
◆ **Lisbon —** Rua Dona Estefãnia, 91 R/C 1000 Lisboa/ Tel. & fax: +351 (1) 314-0314 or 352-0038
**Madrid —** Espíritu Santo 19, 28004 Madrid/ Tel. +34 91 521-3096
**Oslo —** Roahagan 1D, Oslo 0754/ Tel. +47 (22) 062266/ gaurahari.sdha@pamho.net
**Paris —** 230 Avenue de la Division Leclerc, 95200 Sarcelles Village/ Tel. +33 682590079/ paris@pamho.net
**Prague, Czech Republic —** Postal address: Hare Krishna Temple, Luzce 48, 267 18, post office Karlstejn, Czech Republic (for directions: http://harekrsna.cz/cvs/how_get_there)/ Tel. +420 311 516 558 or +420 603 205 991/ info@harekrsna.cz
◆ **Radhadesh, Belgium —** Chateau de Petite Somme, 6940 Septon-Durbuy/ Tel. +32 (086) 322926 (restaurant: 321421)/ radhadesh@pamho.net
◆ **Rome —** Govinda Centro Hare Krsna, via di Santa Maria del Pianto 16, 00186/ Tel. +39 (6) 68891540/ govinda.roma@harekrsna.it
◆ **Stockholm —** Fridhemsgatan 22, 11240/ Tel. +46 (08) 654-9002; Restaurant: Tel. & fax: +46 (8) 654-9004/ lokanatha@hotmail.com
**Warsaw —** Mysiadlo k. Warszawy, 05-500 Piaseczno, ul. Zakret 11/ Tel. +48 (22) 750-7797 or -8247/ kryszna@post.pl
**Zürich —** Bergstrasse 54, 8032/ Tel. +41 (044) 262 33 88/ kgs@pamho.net

### RURAL COMMUNITIES

**France (La Nouvelle Mayapura) —** Domaine d’Oublaisse, 36360, Lucay le Mâle/ Tel. +33 (2) 5440-2395
**Germany (Simhachalam) —** Zielberg 20, 94118 Jandelsbrunn/ Tel. +49 (8583) 316/ info@simhachalam.de
**Hungary (New Vraja-dhama) —** Krisna-völgy, 8699 Somogyvamos, Fö u, 38/ Tel. & fax: +36 (85) 540-002 or 340-185/ info@krisnavolgy.hu
**Italy (Villa Vrindavan) —** Via Scopeti 108, 50026 San Casciano in Val di Pesa (FL)/ Tel. +39 (55) 820054/ isvaripriya@libero.it
**Spain (New Vraja Mandala) —** (Santa Clara) Brihuega, Guadalajara/ Tel. +34 949 280436

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**Cologne, Germany —** Govindam, Roonstrasse 3, 50674 Köln
**Locarno, Switzerland —** Govinda Restaurant, Via Della Motta 10, Locarno 6600/ Tel. +41 (91) 7523852 or 796260804/ radhakanta@pamho.net
**Milan —** Govinda’s, Via Valpetrosa 5, 20123/ Tel. +39 (2) 862417
**Oslo —** Krishna’s Cuisine, Sørkedalsveien 10, 0369 Oslo/ Tel. +47 (2) 269-2269
**Zürich, Switzerland** — Mohini, Weinbergstr, 15, 8001 Zürich/ Tel. +41 44 252 52 11/ info@mohini.ch

## COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (partial list)

**Kiev —** 16, Zorany per., 04078/ Tel. +380 (44) 4338312, 4347028, or 4345533
**Moscow —** Leningradsky Prospect, Vladenie 39 (mail: Begovaya str., 13, OPS 284, a/ya 17, 125284 Moscow)/ Tel. +7 (495) 7394377/ temple@veda.ru

## ASIA (partial list)

**Bangkok, Thailand —** Soi 3, Tanon Itsarapap, Toonburi/ Tel. +66 29445346, 814455401, or 897810623/ swami.bvv.narasimha@pamho.net
**Chittagong, Bangladesh —** Sri Krishna Mandir, in front of Afmi Plaza, Prabartak Sangha (mail: P.O. Box 440)/ Tel. +880 (31) 2551950, 610822; or 1819395948/ iskconctg@gmail.com
**Dhaka, Bangladesh —** 79 Swamibag, Dhaka-11/ Tel. +880 (2) 7122747 or 7122488/ info@iskconbd.org
**Hong Kong —** 6/F Oceanview Court, 27 Chatham Road South (mail: P.O. Box 98919)/ Tel. +852 (2) 739-6818/ iskcon.hong.kong@pamho.net
**Jakarta, Indonesia —** Yayasan Radha-Govinda, P.O. Box 2694, Jakarta Pusat 10001/ Tel. +62 (21) 489-9646/ matsyads@bogor.wasantara.net.id
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## FROM THE EDITOR

# Counting Species

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA often referred to the Purāṇic statement that there are 8.4 million species. A couple of years ago, scientists publicized their latest estimate of the number of species on earth: 8.7 million. But don't get too excited about the closeness of these two numbers.

First of all, scientists estimate that at least 90% of the species that ever existed are extinct, meaning that something like 87 million species have lived at one time or another. The scientists' count would vary with the progression of the ages. But the Vedic count would not. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* relates how all the species of life appeared at or near the beginning of the creation. And even though we don't find each of the 8.4 million species on earth today, that doesn't mean any of them are extinct. The Vedic literature rejects the parochial view that life exists only on earth and is carbon-based. The *Bhagavad-gītā* reveals that life is a transcendental phenomenon having nothing to do with mixtures of material elements. Life is the soul, or *ātmā,* and can exist anywhere in the universe.

Often overlooked in attempts to reconcile the scientists' count of species with Prabhupāda's is that the same word is being used for two different things. Consider that the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* verse Prabhupāda would quote about the 8.4 million species mentions 400,000 species of humans. Science recognizes only one surviving human species—*homo sapiens*—and only two extinct ones. While it is true that according to Vedic literature human species exist throughout the universe, Prabhupāda indicated that various human species exist on this planet as well.

Though the Vedic and modern systems for categorizing species differ, it is still significant that the *Vedas* give an exact number, whereas scientists cannot. We should also keep in mind that the modern system is somewhat arbitrary. It's a contrivance—a convenient tool, but not without its glitches.

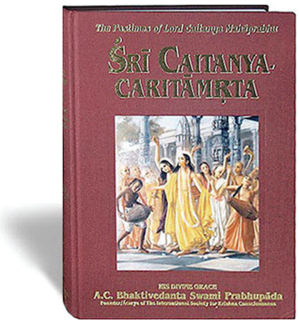
What is a species according to the Vedic literature? The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* verse Prabhupāda would quote doesn't contain any word that could be translated as "species." It's a list: "900,000 aquatics, 2,000,000 nonmoving entities," and so on. Besides "species," Śrīla Prabhupāda also referred to them in other ways, such as "bodily forms" and "forms of life." He said they come about by the mixing of the three modes of material nature: goodness, passion, and ignorance. Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.22) that souls in human bodies, influenced by particular mixtures of the modes according to their choices, determine which species they'll enter after death.

The number 8.4 million is not as important as the point Prabhupāda often made when he cited that number: We, the soul, have been in all those nonhuman bodies and risk returning to any of them if we misuse the human form of life. Only in human life can we awaken our innate Kṛṣṇa consciousness and return to our original home with Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world. We must not waste our life improving our standards of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending—the sole concerns of other species.

Regarding varieties of human species, Prabhupāda says that humans can be categorized as "uncivilized, half-civilized, and civilized." A civilized human being, in the opinion of the Vedic scriptures, is someone on a progressive spiritual path. The person in the highest species of human beings, therefore, is one whose consciousness is absorbed in pursuing pure love of God, the attainment of which frees one forever from any risk of reentering lower forms of life.

—*Nāgarāja Dāsa*

# Śrīla Prabhupāda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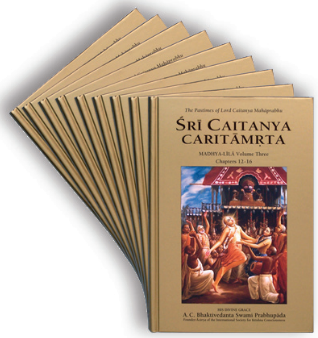
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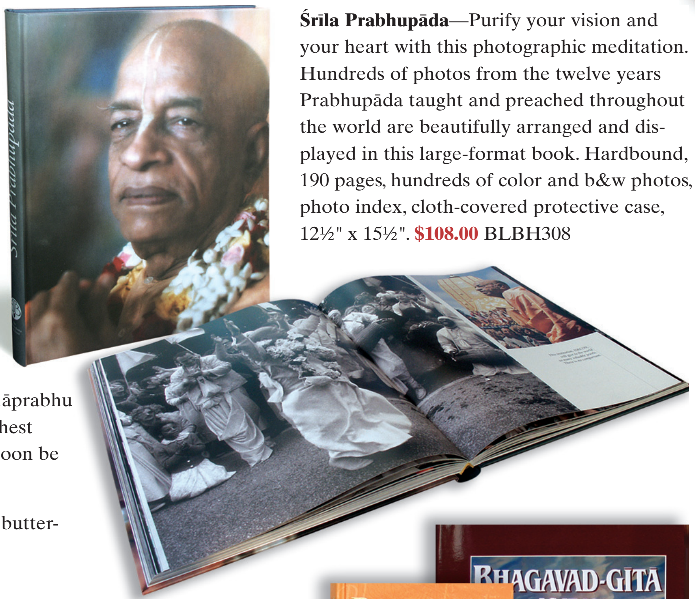
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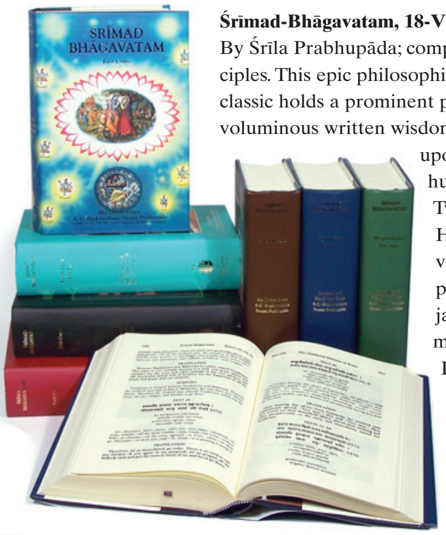
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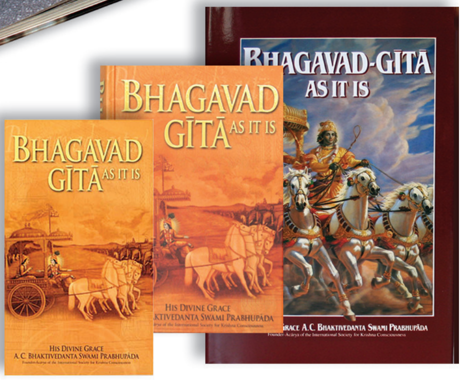
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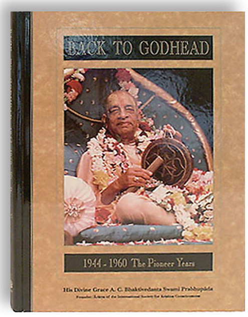
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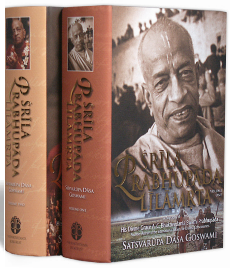
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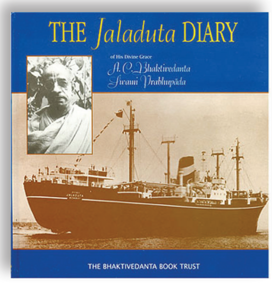
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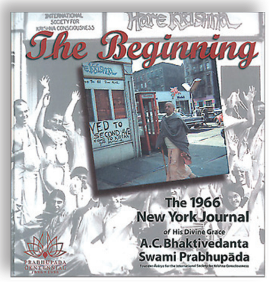
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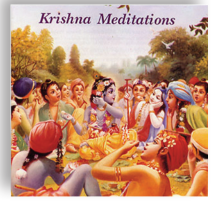
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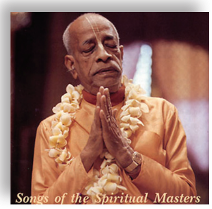
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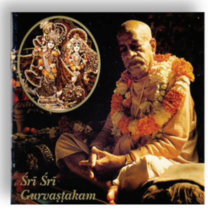
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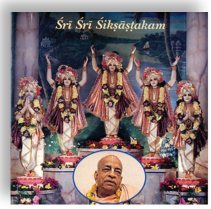
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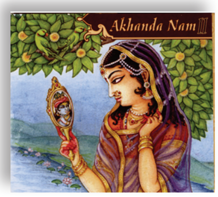
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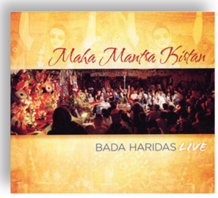
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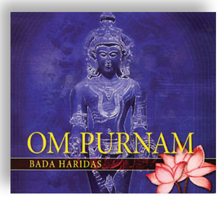
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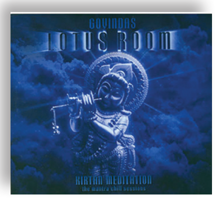
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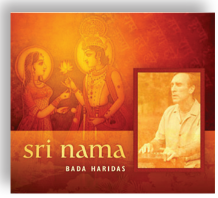
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**Laḍḍu Gopāla Deity Set**—This form of Kṛṣṇa, young Laḍḍu Gopāla, is a favorite. He comes with two dresses: gold and pink, and red and silver. In beaded gold and beaded silver are two full sets of accessories: necklaces, bracelets, anklets, and crowns with a peacock feather. Brass, approximately 4" tall and 5" from extended hand to back foot. **$69.95** KXWT652

**Rādhā-Gopīnātha Deity Set**—This set comes with two full silk outfits: saffron, blue, and gold; and yellow, lavender, and silver. Brass, Kṛṣṇa is approximately 6½" tall, and Rādhā is 5". **$159.95** KXWT765

**Gaura-Nitāi Deity Set**—These deities of Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda are a perfect start for your home altar. One set of clothes and accessories included. These brass deities are 8" tall, including Their bases. **$179.95** KXWT754

**Rādhā–Madana-Mohana Deity Set**—Start your own home altar, or add to your existing one, with this beautiful set of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa deities with two full silk outfits: green, blue, and gold; and black and silver. Brass, Kṛṣṇa is approximately 7¼" tall, and Rādhā is 6". **$199.95** KMDW803

**Pūrṇimā Gaura-Nitāi Deity Set**—Lavishly decorated and cast with sweetly smiling faces. Both come with two full silk outfits: blue, yellow, and gold; and golden-yellow, blue, and silver. Brass, approximately 10" tall, including the 2" base. Base is 4" in diameter. **$799.95** KMDW804

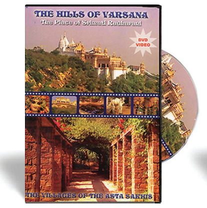
**Lakṣmī-Nṛsiṁha Brass Mūrti**—This *mūrti* will make a blessed centerpiece for any home or temple altar. Made from poured brass, the figure is solid and sturdy and of artisan quality, with a warm, golden finish. He is 13" tall and 8" wide, with a base of 7" x 7". **$629.95** KXWT880

**Carved-Wood Nṛsiṁha Mūrti**—Lord Nṛsiṁha, the half-man, half-lion incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, appeared to protect His devotee Prahlāda. The lightweight wood has a soft light-brown finish that gives the *mūrti* an attractive style. He stands 11¼" tall, including the base, and is 6¼" wide at the widest point. **$238.95** S2SF599

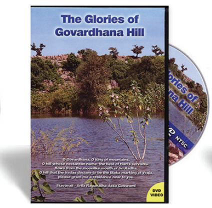
## Travel DVDs

Sri Radhakunda

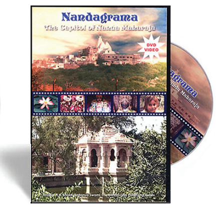
**Sri Radhakunda**—Produced by Bhakti Caitanya Swami. Visit the most holy of holy places, Radha Kunda. Lost to the world for almost 50 centuries, it was rediscovered in 1516 on Caitanya Mahāprabhu's pilgrimage to Vrindavan. One disc, 64 minutes. **$17.95** BCVD45V



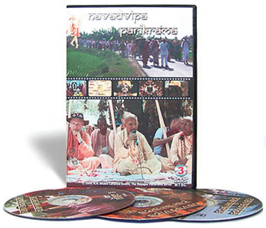
**Hills of Varsana**—Produced by Bhakti Caitanya Swami. Journey through the sacred hills of Varshana, Rādhā's village. Visit the temples and see the places where Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa spent Their youth 5,000 years ago. One disc, 65 minutes. **$17.95** B8VD33H



**The Glories of Govardhana Hill**—Produced by Bhakti Caitanya Swami. The crown jewel of Vrindavan—exploring the sites where Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, and the cowherd boys and girls spent their childhood. One disc, 83 minutes. **$17.95** BCVD43D



**Nandagrama**—Produced by Bhakti Caitanya Swami. Explore Nandagrama, the childhood home of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Visit the holy sites and temples, and see the many places Kṛṣṇa and His friends played and tended the calves. One disc, 110 minutes. **$17.95** BCVD43N



**Navadvipa Parikrama, 3-Disc Set**—Produced by Bhakti Caitanya Swami. Follows ISKCON's annual Navadvīpa *parikramā* (walking pilgrimage). Starting at Lord Caitanya's birthplace, the *parikramā* visits the many sites where Lord Caitanya spent His childhood and youth. Approximately 280 total minutes. **$37.95** BCVD55D

Vraja Mandala Parikrama

**Vraja Mandala Parikrama, 4-Disc Set**—This visual tour takes you throughout the sacred land of Vraja, visiting many temple, forests, and lakes in Vrindavan, Govardhan, Mathura, and many other places where Kṛṣṇa spent His childhood. 280 total minutes. **$49.95** BCVD44D

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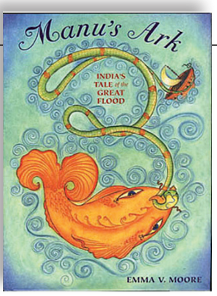
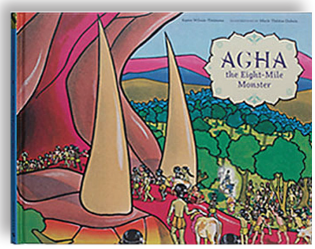
# Gifts for Children

**Rādhārāṇī Doll, Magenta Sari**—This doll will last through childhood and be cherished always. She has a magenta *sari*, ankle bells, necklaces, real Tulasī neck beads, and real earrings. Permanently embroidered with her exquisite face, a necklace, and detailed palm and foot markings. Approximately 19" tall. **$49.95** G4KD540



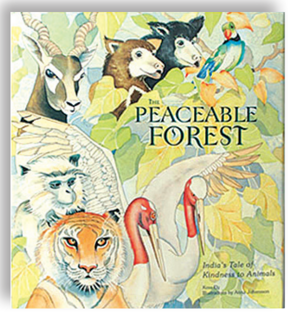
**Manu's Ark**—By Emma V. Moore. From ancient India comes this story of the Great Flood, lushly illustrated and retold for children. Hardbound, 16 pages, 8½" x 11½". **$16.95** MPBK132

**Gopāla Doll, Gold Turban**—This beautiful soft-blue Gopāla doll is durable enough for children, but so attractive you may want to keep him on a shelf for yourself. He has ankle bells, necklaces, a real flute, real Tulasī neck beads, and real earrings. Approximately 19" tall. **$47.95** G4KD700



**Agha, the Eight-Mile Monster**—By Karen Wilson-Timmons; illustrations by Marie Therese Dubois. This delightful book based on a story from the *Bhāgavatam* describes one of Kṛṣṇa's amazing adventures. Hardbound, 28 pages, 11" x 9". **$16.95** MPBK139

**Sleeping-Cow Pillow, Yamuna**—Your child will love this unique toy, exclusively from Krishna.com. Made of soft cotton in bright colors for hours of huggable fun. Stuffed with poly-fill. The pillow is decorated only on one side. Approximately 12" long and 6" tall. **$19.95** G4KD626



**The Peaceable Forest**—By Kosa Ely; illustrated by Anna Johansson. With awareness comes a change of heart, and a cruel hunter becomes transformed by the revelation of the holy sage Nārada Muni. Hardbound, 16 pages, 10½" x 11½". **$16.95** MPBK133

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**Jagannātha Coloring Book**—This coloring book is inspired by the ancient Vedic literature—the priceless treasure of Indian heritage handed down from ancient times by wise men, sages, and grandparents. Softbound, 32 pages, 11" x 14½". **$7.95** MPBC789

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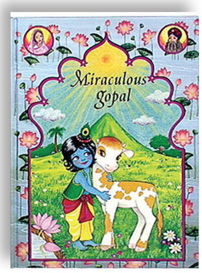
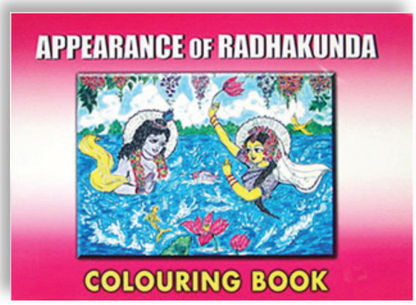


**Miraculous Gopal**—By Sita Gilbakian; illustrated by Padmāvatī Dāsī. Lord Kṛṣṇa saves the residents of Vrindavan from a torrential rainfall by lifting Govardhan Hill. This is the second book in an entertaining trilogy. The full-page illustrations capture the imagination with beautiful detail and bright colors. Hardbound, 36 pages, color illustrations, 8" x 11½". **$9.95** MPBK784



**Appearance of Radhakunda**—Filled with beautiful illustrations of Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, and the inhabitants of Vrindavan, this coloring book tells the exciting story of Kṛṣṇa's killing the demon bull Ariṣṭāsura and then creating Radha Kunda. 16 full-size drawings, softbound, 16 coloring pages, 13½" x 9½". **$3.95** S2BC390

# VEDIC THOUGHTS

If by accumulating pious activities (*kṛta-puṇya-puñjāḥ*) one is raised to the platform of pure devotional service, Kṛṣṇa is always visible in the core of one's heart. One who has attained such perfection is all-beautiful in transcendental bliss. The present Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is an attempt to keep Kṛṣṇa in the center, for if this is done all activities will automatically become beautiful and blissful.

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.13.8, Purport

The Lord never refuses His surrendered devotee or leaves his desires unfulfilled. The Lord has the sole power to fulfill all our requirements and to give us full protection. If we can gain this conviction, we will become fearless. We will no longer feel anxiety. We will become happy.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura
*Amṛta Vāṇī,* Chapter "Material and Spiritual Topics"

The word "Brahman" indicates the complete Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. That is the verdict of all Vedic literature.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 6.147

We consider chanting to be alone the most excellent form of *bhakti,* better than remembering, which appears only in one's own turbulent heart. For chanting harnesses not only the faculty of speech, which it engages directly, but also the mind and sense of hearing. And chanting helps not only the person practicing it but others as well.

Vaikuṇṭha-dūtas
*Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* 2.3.148

Whoever knows Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without doubting, is to be understood as the knower of everything, and he therefore engages himself in full devotional service, O son of Bharata.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
*Bhagavad-gītā* 15.19

O my Lord, Your devotees can see You through the ears by the process of bona fide hearing, and thus their hearts become cleansed, and You take Your seat there. You are so merciful to Your devotees that You manifest Yourself in the particular eternal form of transcendence in which they always think of You.

Lord Brahmā
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.9.11

Lord Kṛṣṇa has appeared as *Bhāgavatam* through Śukadeva and Parīkṣit, and like the sun among the planets, it shines among the *Purāṇas.* It has twelve forms (volumes), just as the sun has twelve forms for each of the months of the year. With eighteen thousand verses like its leaves, it has appeared like a desire tree to fulfill the goals of the great devotees.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.1, Commentary

# 2013

# Hare Kṛṣṇa Festival of India

## *Schedule for North America*

*2012 New York Rathayātrā*
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REMAINING EVENTS:

**September 4–6:** University of Colorado, Boulder, Festival
**September 9–11:** University Program in Denver
**September 14:** Jacksonville Beach Rathayātrā
**September 28:** Philadelphia Rathayātrā
**Early October:** University Programs in the Baltimore and Washington, D.C., Areas
**October 12:** Potomac, Maryland, Śrī Rāma Vijaya Festival

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Some of these dates are yet to be confirmed. Before scheduling your travel, be sure to confirm the festival date with the ISKCON temple in the city where the festival is to be held. Or email Festival of India: madhuhadasa@gmail.com.

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